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ATIONAL DEFENCE

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD

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A STUDY IN MILITARISM

BY

J. RAMSAY MACDONALD, M.P.

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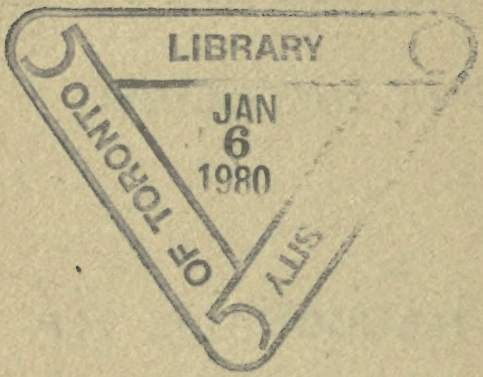

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TO

THE TRADE UNIONISTS OF THE COUNTRY

WHO ARE AT THE PARTING OF THE WAYS, AND

UPON WHOSE COURAGE AND WISDOM

THE FUTURE OF EUROPE SO

LARGELY DEPENDS

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INTRODUCTION

I HAVE tried in this book to prove that militarism of an unlimited kind is a necessary consequence of the political policy which European States have been pursuing hitherto. For some years I have been forced against my will nearer and nearer to the conclusion that, given the way in which we have been conducting our foreign affairs and the features which our *entente* with Russia and France have been assuming, war was becoming inevitable [1] and the policy of the National Service League was becoming an unavoidable calamity. We could not get the country to take a sufficiently apprehensive interest in its European policy, and the others could not induce it to face the responsibilities of its position.[2] It was right in refusing militarism, and

[1] Whoever has had an opportunity of reading the dispatches of the Belgian Ministers in London, Paris, and Berlin, published in America in 1915, under the title of *European Politics during the Decade before the War as described by Belgian Diplomatists*, will understand how this inevitability was troubling the minds of those who were well informed, and how the inevitability arose. The point is also dealt with by Mr. Lowes Dickinson in his *The European Anarchy*, George Allen & Unwin, 2s. 6d. net. See also Mr. Morel's *Truth and the War*, 2s.

[2] But note the argument in Chapter IV.

yet it would not take the trouble to avoid war. That was the dilemma in which we were.

When the war broke out conscription could not be avoided. We had committed ourselves to policies and expeditions which made every other method of raising the necessary troops a mere makeshift. If voluntaryism could have been saved, it was not by recruiting meetings which only hastened it to its end, but by a policy which at the outset would have defined in severely precise language our responsibilities and our purpose in entering the war, and which would have kept open channels for diplomatic negotiation. That was never done except in perorations which increased fervour and misunderstanding at the same time. When the Coalition was formed, voluntaryism, doomed for months, actually died, because the Cabinet had to be kept together, and in the face of the military demands the conscriptionists had to be appeased. Labour in particular lost its chance of saving the nation by keeping control upon militarism, and the country set out upon the road to military victory through the ruin of civil liberty. We sacrificed the future to the present when we might have saved both. In this book I deal with the future.

Those who read what I have written will have two questions constantly in their minds, and I will deal with them straight away. The first is, "Would you disarm immediately after the war, whether other

nations did so or not?" and the second is, "How is the old order of policy which you say brought the war upon Europe to be ended?"

It is impossible to disarm right away. When one has been pursuing for a long time a wrong path, one has to consume some little time in returning to wiser ways. There must be an intervening time, the features of which (for instance, how armaments can be progressively reduced) require for their discussion a book to itself. I wish to raise issues more fundamental and controlling than expediencies, because I feel that nothing will injure the future more than if we accept expediencies as final settlements—than if we assume that the best we can do for the moment is to be regarded as satisfactory. It must be remembered that there will be no war for at least ten or twenty years after this, and we have that time in which to lay the foundations of peace. What I insist upon is that if during these years false starts are made or unstable securities accepted, the next generation will find itself in our position. There is no compromise possible in militarism. It is all or none.

I do not discuss temporary expediencies and makeshifts. I have tried to bring my readers face to face with ultimate and governing facts. The important thing is definitely to see one's error, definitely to understand it, definitely to turn one's back upon it. And it is particularly important as

regards militarism to see that every—even the best—halfway house is a dangerous dwelling-place, and that so long as militarism in any shape or form exists it is a menace to peace.

This country has been grievously misled by a kind of pious pacifism, which lulled it into a false sense of security, which refused to face the truth, which allowed it to drift into war whilst it was preaching peace, and which, when the war broke out, chirped about this being the last of the wars and linked its arms in those of Mars as the saviour of society and the herald of peace. This kind of pacifism is to be in the future as impotent for good and as fruitful of evil as it has been in the past.

There can be no peace until the people search for it with two assumptions in their minds: the first, that war is not made by a conscious effort of any one's will, but is an event in political policy, an impasse; the second, that arms never can provide for national security, that they only keep nations insecure, and that they evolve an organization, a morality, a necessity, and an expediency based upon Force as Right, and that these are constantly extending their authority and their threats against liberty and self-government.

Militarism has increased its power enormously within the last century, not because it has been successful but because it has failed. The nations have increased their military preparations and

handed themselves over to military control, obedient to exactly the same impulse as that which urges a gambler to increase his stakes. When a gambler working upon a system loses, he increases his risks till he loses all. After every war the failure of militarism to secure the purposes of the war and remove the causes of war has led to demands for a more efficient and thorough militarism. I might vary the simile. The nations have been like sick men taking patent medicines. The less good the trusted specific does, the bigger the dose they take. When nations fear each other, Governments have an unlimited command over their resources and their capacity to sacrifice. To organize the power of resistance and attack seems such an obvious security to those who do not think of consequences, and armies seem so necessary, that no cautious man can question them if he does not follow cause and effect far enough. The truth which I want to drive home is that the nation which trusts to the sword must perish by the sword, because it has committed itself to a system of defence which cannot defend but which must in the end destroy.

I have no belief that the waste and cruelties of war will ever end it. If that were so, the mere development of the powers of destruction would drive nations to seek peace. War belongs to emotions more primitive and elusive than those

which determine bargains over a counter. Its very sacrifices are acceptable to people like martyrdom. We say truly that armaments and war depend on political policy, but that is only part of the truth. Armaments and armies also influence political policy. We live in a world of action and reaction, of causes producing effects, and effects becoming causes for further effects. I believe that so long as there are armies there will be wars, because the existence of armies produces those situations under which the sacrifices of war become acceptable to the people. That is the fact which rules everything, and if we do not face it we face nothing.

I therefore say that whatever the intermediate stage may be, it must be tolerated only as an intermediate stage in which there should be no lingering, and that the people all the time should be working and agreeing to hurry through with it and so get to the end of it.

Then, as to the second question. The existing order of policy and tradition cannot make peace. In its hands this war will just leave behind it the usual crop of unsolved problems and irritations which in due course will strengthen militarism and diplomacy. Then Europe will steadily drift into another conflict. If this war has not forfeited the confidence of the masses of Europe in the kind of Governments which they have been

having, there is to be no guarantee of peace in Europe. International relations are controlled in such a way as to make war inevitable. To discuss the consequences of this would require a book, but the fundamental points of the programme of the Union of Democratic Control and its publications may be consulted.

To think of peace under such conditions is like expecting a warm, gentle, nourishing rain when the temperature is below zero. It is therefore futile to think of ending militarism and war under existing diplomatic conditions. The one depends upon the other ; both must be destroyed together. This war is the proof of the failure of both.

Special as may be the German responsibility to-day, no greater misfortune could befall Europe than if that responsibility were made to obscure those of a more general character. If the wider truth is not seen, Europe will be left in the clutches of militarism. That is why so many interests are anxious to make people believe that one man made the war or that one national clique forced it. The one man's head may be chopped off, the national clique may be deprived of power—but the armies will remain. If the victimized nations could but see that this fraud of force to which they are trusting is the very thing which is oppressing them and scourging them, if they once grasp that the

old order of diplomacy and militarism has made the war inevitable and will continue to make war inevitable, then that old order will disappear and war will go with it.

My answer to the second question therefore is, that so soon as peace appears above the horizon the democratic organizations of the various nations (Labour in particular) should get together, should confer simultaneously with the official diplomatists, and, free from old traditions and modes of diplomacy, should agree amongst themselves about an international action which will be co-operative and express the really pacific national wills.

In one of the means for securing national unity I am particularly interested. The International Socialist movement bade fair to begin the new order, but the war came too soon for it. It had not established its grip firmly enough, and the current down the rapids sped too swiftly since the Agadir incident for any international unofficial movement to withstand it and save Europe from having to tumble over the waterfall. Still, we must return to the corporate action of the workers of Europe. The working classes must build up a Labour international diplomacy (other political and social sections doing their share in ways suitable to themselves), which will be enforced and guaranteed by parties in every European Parliament working in union with each other, insisting upon

knowing what their Foreign Offices are doing and pursuing a common policy decided upon by themselves at joint conferences held frequently. In other words, we must create a machinery of democratic diplomacy with decisions guaranteed and enforced by the mutual confidence of the peoples which only the existence of such an organization can establish. We can have Hague Courts by the score and Arbitration Treaties by the thousand, but without this diplomacy of the democracy there can be no guarantee of peace.

This organization of international democracy will seek to control the action of the various nations so that the official diplomacy, if disruptive and aggressive, will be deprived of its backing from public opinion, and will thus find its agreements and policy useless. In other words, there must be for foreign policy the same checking and controlling political organization expressing the popular will as there is for home policy, but obviously this organization must be international and not national. The general strike against war, should it ever be necessary then, will be assured by an international working-class compact so that it will not weaken one nation which resorts to it—a foolish and suicidal thing—but will prevent any military authority launching war upon the world.

Above all, this new diplomacy will trust to no armed force. It will give no support to citizen

armies because it will have no need of them, or to any idea that militarism is anything but a menace to the security of a nation. It will labour under no delusion that there is a difference between military defence and offence, because it will have been taught by experience that both are aspects of the same error. People talk of an international police force as though the enforcement of law in an international State made up of a dozen or so of nations could be done in the same way as in a national State of millions of citizens. That is not so. A delinquent State, when the people have seen the futility of militarism, must in the very nature of things accept the decisions of international courts. Its people will see to that. If they do not, each State will continue to provide its own army of defence, and instead of an international police force we shall have the present condition of affairs, with all the consequences described in this book. To call national armies an International Police Force seems to me to be nothing but sticking new misleading labels upon them.

In an oration delivered in memory of Jaurès on the second anniversary of his death, M. Vandervelde spoke these words, quoting Nietzsche, "that great German who more than any one detested Prussian militarism": "Those who fight against monsters ought to take care lest they become

monsters themselves," and he added: "We fight against militarism and the spirit of conquest; take care lest we one day become the prisoners of militarism." Europe has been the prisoner of militarism for generations, and every time it has tried to free itself it has only deepened and darkened its dungeon. Is it to repeat its past error?

NATIONAL DEFENCE

CHAPTER I

PACIFISM AND PEACE

WHEREVER the rival armies may be when this war ends, none of the great political problems which have produced the conflict will have been solved. The nations will not be in a position or in a frame of mind to dispense with armed force. They will be exhausted; they will be horror-stricken; they will begin to examine the tales and the opinions which braced them whilst the work of mutual destruction was proceeding, and they will correct the one and revise the other, but they will not have rid themselves of those fears and ambitions, those rivalries and interests, those enmities and injuries which call for military preparations and which ultimately use them.

This futile ending of the greatest and the most brutal and costly war which the world has ever known can be obviated only on one condition—that the people of Europe settle for ever the causes of war. If they content themselves with expressing

sentiments of peace whilst they allow policies to be pursued and obligations to be incurred which make conflict inevitable, their neglect as citizens will render their piety as individuals of no avail. Indeed, this piety will only be an added danger. For how will it work out? In the intervals between the wars the piety of pacifism will tinge public opinion, and the danger of the international policy which is again leading the nations into war will be minimized by statesmen who are at one and the same time responsible for the fateful policy and yet dependent for their authority upon electors of pacific intentions.

This heart-breaking situation when good popular intention becomes a national weakness, and when it prevents the menacing truth from being told and the proper defence from being prepared, was that in which Europe found itself in 1914 when the present war came upon it.

In Germany, where authority is stronger than in any other European State except Russia, this danger was not very great, though it was increasing. Bernhardi wrote in order to minimize it. He shared the view of the military class that a war was inevitable. He believed that Germany would have to fight to secure necessary outlets for her commerce and her people, and he believed that the encompassing Powers meant to challenge the growing influence of Germany in the world. Men

brought up in a military atmosphere, whose actions and outlook are determined by military assumptions, who believe that force is the midwife of progress, would naturally take that view, and those men have more authority in Germany than elsewhere. But Bernhardi wrote because the German people threatened to become actively pacifist. They had been a military nation, he said, but " in striking contrast to this military aptitude, they have to-day become a peace-loving—an almost too peace-loving—nation. A rude shock is needed to awaken their warlike instincts and compel them to show their military strength." [1] Again : " Thus the political power of the nation, whilst fully alive beneath the surface, is fettered externally by this love of peace." And again : " From this standpoint I must first of all examine the aspirations of peace which seem to dominate our age and threaten to poison the soul of the German people." He told them of the danger they were in and, by explaining military plans and necessities, sought to enlighten them as to what he conceived to be their duty. His book fell flat, and its circulation was insignificant. But the war came before the Germans were in a frame of mind to distrust their military leaders. Their fear of Russia was known to everybody,[2] and by playing upon that the Govern-

[1] *Germany and the Next War*, pp. 10, etc.

[2] Bebel once told me in private conversation that if Russia attacked Germany he himself would shoulder a rifle if he could.

ment rallied the German nation into a military unit, and it fought.

But in Great Britain political sentiment was enormously stronger than military authority, and political sentiment was pacifist. It had, in consequence, to be mollified. Whilst every one who was in touch with European movements became increasingly unhappy about the outlook of affairs, the masses had to be kept quiet by pacific assurances. A handful of men trained in military thought tried to do in Great Britain what Bernhardi did in Germany, but failed. The Navy League and the National Service League saw the military implications of the international policies in which our country was mixed up, and conducted their respective propaganda. The nation refused to listen, not because it would not accept the responsibility of self-defence, but because it had to be told, and was told, by the politicians that it was not in danger. It assumed that defence meant repelling invasion, not fighting on the Continent. It was wrong—fortunately, as I shall show—but it was wrong all the same. Thus we neither got the chance of removing the danger by insisting upon a revision of international policy nor of providing for it by adequate military preparations.[1]

[1] Whoever has written or spoken with knowledge and honesty since this war has broken out has, irrespective of other opinions, agreed that the Governments have hoodwinked the nation.

The proof of this lies in the records of the past dozen years. Nearly every increase in naval expenditure was accompanied by the pledge that Ministers hoped to produce reductions the next year. Mr. Lloyd George gave the country a New Year's message for 1914—the year when the war broke out—in which these sentences occurred : "I think it [this] the most favourable moment that has presented itself during the last twenty years. . . . Our relations with Germany are infinitely more friendly now than they have been for years." His misreading of the Agadir incident is plain, but his assurances regarding it were emphatic. It "served the useful purpose of bringing home to Germany and ourselves the perils involved in the atmosphere of suspicion which had been created and maintained by the politicians, the press, and certain interests." Finally, he gave the country this soothing explanation and defence of Germany's military preparations : "The German Army is vital,

Cf. Oliver, *Ordeal by Battle*, p. 23 (abridged edition) : "The criticism against British foreign policy for upwards of a century is that it has aimed at managing our international relations on a system of hoodwinking the people." That on the one side ; this, from the *Manchester Guardian*, December 3, 1912, on the other : "Too much blame is laid on the newspapers for the part they play in provoking international misunderstandings, for no one is more ready to use them for its own purposes than the Foreign Office itself and its agents abroad, and if half-truths often do mischief, the fault is with the methods of diplomacy for concealing the rest."

not merely to the existence of the German Empire but to the very life and independence of the nation itself, surrounded as Germany is by other nations each of which possesses armies almost as powerful as her own." The only effect, and surely the only intention, of these words was to lull the nation into a comfortable restfulness.

But the most conclusively apposite proof of my contention is found in two speeches delivered by Mr. Asquith. In 1912 Lord Haldane went to Berlin to try to come to some agreement with Germany after the very serious friction over Morocco. Mr. Asquith referred to Lord Haldane's mission and the subsequent negotiations, during a debate on Imperial defence in the House of Commons [1] as follows :—

> Our relations with the great German Empire are, I am glad to say, at this moment—and I feel sure are likely to remain—relations of amity and goodwill. My noble friend Lord Haldane, the present Lord Chancellor, paid a visit to Berlin early in the year. He entered upon conversations and an interchange of views there which have been continued since in a spirit of perfect frankness and friendship, both on one side and the other, and in which, I am glad to say, we now have the advantage of the participation of a very distinguished diplomatist in the person of the German Ambassador.

When the war broke out, Mr. Asquith, speaking in Cardiff,[2] referred to the Haldane conversations

[1] July 25, 1912, *Hansard*, p. 1393.
[2] October 3, 1914.

and the interchange of views which followed in a diametrically opposite sense :—

> They [the German Government] wanted us to pledge ourselves absolutely to neutrality in the event of Germany being engaged in war, and this, mind you, at a time when Germany was enormously increasing both her aggressive and defensive resources, and especially upon the sea. They asked us—to put it quite plainly—they asked us for a free hand so far as we were concerned, if, and when, they selected the opportunity to overbear, to dominate, the European world.

In peace, public opinion demanded some pledge that we were at peace, and the pledge was given through the House of Commons; at war, a justification for the war had to be given, and the very same circumstances which justified a pacific statement in 1912 were made to justify a belligerent statement in 1914. This proves that whilst the nation was drifting into war the nation itself was not only asleep but was being kept asleep. During these critical years we had the most specific assurances that we were in no entanglements, that we had no commitments, that we never signed secret treaties, and none of the assurances were reliable.

The unwillingness of a people to accept militarism will not enable them to avoid it. Certain political policies must be supported by force, and if these policies are under the control of Government departments inspired by the methods, the traditions and the staffs of the Foreign Offices of

Europe—in the very nature of things the people who are to supply the force must be kept ignorant of the policy. This fact lies at the threshold of every profitable discussion of peace. The pieties of a peace movement which stops at sentiment delude the country during peace and are swept away during a war. They prevent honesty before a war and are no safeguard to reason and reflection when a war has come.

Therefore the people need knowledge, and they need power. If they do not get these, they will have to accept militarism, and they should not be under any delusion as to the kind of militarism which is to be their lot.

CHAPTER II

NATIONAL DEFENCE AND A CITIZEN ARMY

JUST before the war broke out two very important books were published in France, *L'Armée Nouvelle*, by Jaurès, and *Faites un Roi sinon Faites la Paix*, by Marcel Sembat, now a member of the French Cabinet. Jaurès' book—very lengthy and somewhat prolix—contained an extraordinarily fresh exposition of military tactics and organization based upon three propositions:—

1. that the army should be a citizen force ;
2. that its tactics should be those of defence, not offence ; and
3. that only when the army is a citizen force can the policy of the country be defensive.

The way in which many of the ideas explained in the book seemed to have anticipated what actually happened in the war drew great attention to it, and an abstract of it has been published in English for the purpose of inducing Labour in

particular to accept the National Service which it advocates for France.[1]

Jaurès' position regarding Great Britain, however, must not be misunderstood. I have had many conversations with him on the subject, and he never expressed to me the view that what was best for France was also best for England. At International Socialist Congresses, when military discussions were on, he always excluded England from his proposals. *L'Armée Nouvelle* was addressed to France and to countries with large standing armies and continental frontiers. His references to Great Britain in the book are of a special kind.[2] He describes the Lord Haldane reorganization of the Army, and considers that unless European policy changes it is only a transition form, and that a militia system must finally be evolved. He discusses the National Service League's proposals of universal service and suspects them. "If I were to speak quite candidly," he says,[3] "I do not believe that peace is the chief consideration of Lord Curzon and his friends." They would not be sorry if something so upset the minds of the British people that they would plunge into war. He regards the whole movement here as an Imperialist and aggressive one. "It is an effort to capture for political Imperialism

[1] Published under the title of *Democracy and Military Service*

[2] Pp. 496–515. [3] P. 512.

the forces of democracy." [1] More specifically he points out that Great Britain has an alternative:—

> In any case I repeat that England must either aid the movement to inaugurate a new policy which will result in agreements to disarm, and which will dissipate the nightmares of war and invasion, or accept universal service by the force of events, by the implacable logic of an armed peace, and by the dull fever of an Anglo-German conflict.[2]

The meaning of this is quite clear. Jaurès hoped that we would pursue a peace policy, and keep out of the politics and antagonisms which compelled the rest of Europe to resort to universal military service, whilst being perfectly convinced that if we did not do that the implacable logic of events would drive us into a militia system. The author of *L'Armée Nouvelle* did not wish us to adopt his system except as a last resort, and after we had failed to pursue the political policy which he advocated and which he believed was open to us.

The book which his friend and colleague, Sembat, wrote was the political supplement to *L'Armée Nouvelle*. In a sentence its contention is that political policy—not war preparations—not military organization, determines peace and war; that if nations have to trust for their defence to arms during peace they create, not only an undemocratic spirit amongst their people, but must also adopt

[1] Pp. 512-13. [2] P. 514.

a national organization other than democratic: "Make a King or make Peace." This is the evolution which is inevitable, and from that point of view he criticized adversely the Entente and the policy of France.

In these books we have two great Frenchmen, both devoted friends of peace, discussing from different angles the problems of peace. "Create a peace army," says the one, "because European policy threatens you, and you must defend yourself." "Create a peace policy," says the other, "because militarism threatens the very State which it is called in to aid."

Between these two magnets of fear and reason the peace sentiment swings. It creates an army to defend itself, and it supplements its military efforts by diplomatic alliances; at the same time it sighs for a policy which will remove dangers and make military precautions unnecessary. Here is the fix in which nations are; and the question which very few people consider, but which long experience thrusts upon us is, Can a nation swinging between these two policies ever have peace? Can a Jaurès ever assist to write history as both he and Sembat would like it to be written?

I think not, and I believe the reason to be as plain as any reason ever can be.

One of several unreal distinctions which Jaurès makes is that if the army is a citizen force, such

a force would be more pacific and less under the control of diplomatists and aggressive military sections than a barrack army or a hired one. In other words, he argues that a citizen army is a peace army, and that statesmen can use it only for defence because it will not tolerate a war of aggression. That is not true. The argument was a familiar one at International Congresses, but this war has disproved it. No people ever *make* war, whether they have to fight themselves or only pay others to fight for them. But having said that, we have said nothing of any value or importance. There was little difference in the way that the people of Great Britain, France, and Germany leaped to the sword in the autumn of 1914, and if there was any difference in the policies of the various Governments during the negotiations which preceded the war, it was the Government with the voluntary and the hired Army which hesitated most, the Government which believed that it would only have to supply a few hundred thousand men to do its share of the fighting. If there was any difference in the popular desire for peace during the last ten years, no one can say that the British people, who did not expect to have to fight as a whole, were more bellicose than either the French or the Germans. Indeed, what happened rather proves that the more general the military service is, the more readily

the people accept the military assumption that war cannot be avoided, the more do they become accustomed to take it for granted that soldiers will be used to settle international quarrels. Nor is there anything in the argument that if people have to fight themselves they will be more careful to see that the sword is only the last resort. Whether they fight or only pay, their Governments have to persuade them that they have justice and righteousness on their side, and that they are defending themselves and not transgressing on other people's rights. It was a nation that Napoleon led to threaten Europe, and not a hired or a barrack army. Jaurès for a moment forgot his French history. On the other hand, when people know that they themselves have to fight, they more readily accept doctrines of "military necessity." The military argument that Belgium had to be used as a highway in order to save the lives of German soldiers was listened to more readily by Germans because the whole nation was liable to be called out than if only 4 per cent. of it had been soldiers.

Further, Jaurès simplified his categories of war when he assumed they were either offensive or defensive. They may also be casual in the sense that they have arisen out of general policy and represent a conflict in ideas or purpose. Wars in these modern days are most likely to come like

the harvest of fate in a Greek tragedy. A mistake is made, an evil is done, and the innocent are dragged in to wipe out the stain with their blood. Whether the army is voluntary and hired or citizen and conscript will make no difference in that quarrel. If there is an army there will then be a fight.

Therefore, when Jaurès says that "a nation in arms is necessarily a nation actuated by justice and uprightness," and that in consequence it will only engage in wars of defence or of liberty, he is saying what is not true, and is using high-sounding words which mislead people. Whether a nation is trained in arms or trusts in a voluntary army, its rulers are under the same necessity to gain public opinion and passion in support of war, and the former nation presents fewer difficulties to such rulers than the latter. A nation in arms thinks more in camps, and obeys involuntarily the impulses of militarism more readily than does a nation not in arms. If this argument is sound, practically the whole of the ground upon which *L'Armée Nouvelle* rests is knocked away.

This is of special importance to Labour. Under the promise that a citizen force is a peace force Labour is being invited to support national compulsion. The only result will be that the citizen Army will teach obedience and military necessity to the people, and cripple their initiative and

independence, and rob their political strength of authority as it did in the case of the German Social Democrats. Universal military training does not raise any barrier of public opinion against war; it only tends to make all public opinion pliable to authority.

CHAPTER III

NATIONAL DEFENCE AND NATIONAL OFFENCE

THE argument of the last chapter is well supported by recent events, but it requires to be elaborated. Sembat says in his book :—

> I know men, reflective, cultured, perspicacious, excellent Frenchmen, who, in their secret minds or in the public expression of their thoughts, wish for war. And I know others (and those are very great in number) who, less decided and more hesitating, inclining ordinarily to peace, clench their teeth at certain times and growl, "After all, if the Germans force us——"

That is the true description of the feelings of a nation during an armed peace.[1] Some few in all nations want war; they see it is inevitable;

[1] Another from a different quarter may be added. A writer in the *Nouvelle Revue*, one of the leading French platforms of intellectual opinion, wrote at the Morocco time :—

"We intend to have war. After forty years of heavily armed peace we can at last utter this opinion. . . . France is ready to strike and to conquer, as she was not ready forty years ago, and as she will not be in four or five years to come, owing to the annual divergent numbers of the birthrate in each country. . . . We, the attacking country, will have arranged with England that their Fleet . . . will follow the remains of the whole German Navy into German waters."

they do nothing to avert it; they let it come; they are interested only in preparing for it; when it comes they say, "Had it not been for us you would not have been so fit to fight as you are—and then where would you have been?" But the masses of all countries believe in peace and talk of peace. Jaurès upon this laid down what to me is the utterly false proposition that an army can be raised by a first-rate Power for purely defensive purposes, and that then that Power can direct its diplomacy also for purely defensive ends.[1]

I write advisedly "a first-rate Power." Such countries as Switzerland or Belgium may arm themselves for defence. They are small; they have no influence on the diplomacy which deals with the clash of great world interests. They are not, on account of their resources, Imperially minded. They have the psychology of the small State. Defence to them is something quite apart from offence, unless they are foolish enough to enter into alliances, when they may have to accept offensive

[1] His argument was inconsistent; for whilst he thought that England should keep out of the ring of armed nations, he argued that France could best keep the peace by being armed, and so compelling her people to interest themselves in policy. I should have thought that if his conclusions about France were sound, England, too, would have been doing the peace of Europe a service if she had armed herself in order to bring the pressure of an interested public opinion to bear upon her Foreign Office. But that is in passing.

responsibilities. Then, however, when they are attacked no defence can save them; it cannot be effective for its purpose.

But where a Great Power, like Germany, France, Russia, or ourselves, is concerned, defence and offence are so intermingled that it is a mere academic abstraction to discuss the two as though they issued in separate policies. "The best defence is often offence" is a sound military maxim; it is a law in military tactics. But it is also a law in diplomacy. It becomes a necessity imposed on both sides when the accumulated burdens and fears of efficient defence call for some action to put an end to the unbearable strain. The man in the street who accepts newspaper origins of war is therefore always misled.

A policy of defence presupposes that some one else is pursuing one of offence. There is always a potential enemy against which the threatened nation measures itself. The defending country not only arms itself but supplements its military equipment by military diplomacy. It chooses armed friends who accept the alliance for reasons of their own. National alliances are, as an almost universal rule, *mariages de convenance*.

Thus France made an Alliance with Russia the terms of which have never been published, but which the world has been given to understand was for defensive purposes. The logical result of this

is the Balance of Power. In this way nations group themselves into two camps, both of which justify themselves on the grounds that they are defensive, and are accepted for that reason by the various peoples involved in them. But the policy of alliances is complicated. It cannot be purely defensive; its motives must be mixed. Historically, the Triple Alliance was defensive; but it developed into an offensive. Who will make bold to say that in reality the Franco-Russian Alliance was purely defensive? Each member of the Alliance has its own aims and policies, which it advances through the Alliance.

In any case, a time comes in the evolution of events when the armed force becomes an influence on political policy. An army being in existence, policy is influenced by the possibility of its use. By and by defence requires, and becomes, hostile action. One of the parties requires to expand, perhaps; it needs a new form of armament, as the Triple Alliance needed a sea power. Or one of the parties—like Austria—becomes involved in an offensive policy. The result is that by a process of subtle development the steps taken for defence produce a condition of war between the whole of the two camps. The very thing which the arms and the alliances were designed to avoid has been brought about by them. They produce the dreaded catastrophe, and at the same time, by meeting it,

seem to justify themselves. Thus, assuming that France had become really pacific before 1914, and that all intention of wiping out the disgrace of the Sedan and the loss of Alsace-Lorraine had vanished from the nationalist French mind, the political situation that year, when the Austro-Balkan or Teuto-Slav troubles came to a head, was such that France could not keep out of a European war. The defensive alliances had gathered round themselves, and got mixed up with, causes of dispute in which their partners took opposing sides and which, in consequence, were extended from the Balkans into the whole of Europe. The position then was, so far as France was concerned, "If Russia fights, we must fight too"; so far as Germany was concerned, "If Russia fights, France, too, will come in, so our military plans must be laid accordingly." The holding back of French troops to within ten kilometres from the frontier at the outbreak of hostilities between Russia and Germany was, therefore, an act of no value whatever—an act which could have had no effect upon subsequent military events. It did affect the political situation, however, and brought public opinion on to the side of the Government. "The French Ambassador gave me to understand that France would fulfil all the obligations entailed by her alliance with Russia, if necessity arose, besides supporting Russia strongly in any diplomatic negotia-

tions,"[1] wrote Sir G. Buchanan to our Foreign Office as early as the 24th July. So with us. Sir Edward Grey said quite truly that the attitude of Germany to Belgium would not have a decisive effect upon our action, though it would influence it.[2] The determining effect was the fact that we were in the Entente and that it was a military alliance. Our honour had been privately bound to see France through in a war with Germany. But the German—still more the Austrian—State, being more militarist in its authority than that of either France or Great Britain, could begin the war by purely military moves, whilst France and Great Britain had to begin it with political moves. Germany lost the war largely because it forgot civilized public opinion; the Allies gained it because they had to pacify the opinion of their people, and, as a by-product, gained that of the world. If Germany had not been so responsive to "military necessity" she would have hesitated before she invaded Belgium and forgot humanity in her eager pursuit of military advantage. That would have made no difference so far as the number of the nations engaged in the war (except for Belgium herself) is concerned, but it would have made all the difference in the world so far as public opinion is concerned.

[1] White Paper No. 6.
[2] White Paper: Documents 119, 123.

But the real fact remains that when the Balkan squabble became a Russian quarrel, France could not then rest upon her sword; when the Balkan weakness became a Teuton irritation and temptation the Alliance, not Austria or Germany alone, acted. The Alliance and the Entente had to fight.

The error in Jaurès' argument that a citizen army can only be an army of defence is therefore shown in every sentence which describes the position of France just before this war broke out. Jaurès assumes that the will of the people makes war. The will of the people is like a leaf floating on the current; it must drift with the stream and go whither the rush drives it. When public opinion settles policy, armies are secondary affairs. When militarism settles policy, public opinion at any given moment is a secondary affair, though it must always be considered.

The same is true as regards Great Britain. Consulting Parliament on the 3rd August, 1914, was a mere formality. It was not a real consultation, because the die had been cast before it took place. The soldier was already in the saddle, but it was necessary for him to pay his respects to Parliament. Great Britain was in the Entente; she had shared in the policy of the Entente; she had to side with the Entente. An event like the invasion of Belgium had no more influence in deciding if the Entente would fight as a whole than a shower of rain had.

It affected public opinion at the moment; it did not determine national policy. The statement made by Lord Hugh Cecil in *The Times* on the 29th April, 1916, that the war was decided, "not by the House of Commons or by the electorate but by the concurrence of Ministers and ex-Ministers" is true to the letter. We were on the brink of war over Morocco in 1911 and 1912 just as we were in July 1914, and in 1911-12 Belgium had never been mentioned. In fact, whatever doubt Germany ever had as to whether the invasion of Belgium would bring us into the war in 1914, she never had the least doubt in 1911 that she would then have had to fight us. If the war had broken out then, public opinion would have been enlisted on some other issue. The simple truth is—and to believe in any other theory is only to humbug ourselves and other people—that the Alliance and the Entente came into conflict because preparations for war and a military policy of defence must always issue in war and provide a reason for war.

The truth I have been setting forth, that when war is made by policy it is impossible, while armies exist, for the people to think and act independently of the circumstances in which they find themselves, is enforced very substantially by the way in which the peoples living under a foreign sovereignty obeyed that call in 1914. The Russian Pole, for instance, marched with the Russian, the

Prusssian Pole with the German, the Austrian Pole with the Austrian Army. The various races of the Austro-Hungarian Empire filled the Austrian Army as though they had no internal discords. The outbreak of war draws all people round their sovereign authority because in the flame of its emotions all differences are fused. Every country is believed to be in the right by its own people, and the objection to being conquered is for the time being the greatest of all objections.

Another attempt to maintain the false distinction between defence and offence is found in the use to which the armed citizen is put. Before the war the National Service League insisted that it only wished to apply conscription for home defence, and the Territorials were enrolled for that purpose. But what did the distinction amount to when the war broke out? The Territorial who resisted the pressure put upon him to offer himself unreservedly had either to have an overwhelming reason for holding back, or was branded as a coward and his life made miserable. When war breaks out an armed and a trained man will, either by law or social pressure, be compelled to become a soldier who fights where his rifle is required and not where he himself selects. A home defence force is potentially an expeditionary force. Soldiers like Lord Roberts and Lord French have always expressed that opinion. Only the civilian was allowed to

remain under any delusion—till the war broke out.

Therefore the distinction which Jaurès made between a military policy for defence and a military policy for offence is altogether unreal and artificial. The truth is that so long as we have armies, whatever may be the justification we plead for them, we shall have wars. The kind of army will not determine how it is to be used. If we once admit that force is necessary for national defence, then every other militarist evil follows. The defence must be complete and professionally able—hence compulsion; the diplomacy which supplements it must play into its hands—hence alliances, secrecy, and Balance of Power; the political psychology which supports it must not weaken it—hence a military caste exercising independent authority in the democratic State. If defence depends on force, then it is criminal, it is treason, to feed the country on honeyed words, on dishonest ideas, on false pacifist piety. For the force must be equal to its work, otherwise it is not defence, and the enemy knows it. The State trusting to force has to turn to force and say, "What you need for your sustenance I must give you, and be content with the remnant of political liberty which is left." How much is left Germany shows. For this is the position of Germany: Believing that she could live only by force and expand only by force, she

trusted to force rather than to negotiation. She became an Empire of force and accepted its conditions. Her defence became an offence. Thus the Great Powers of Europe became committed to war, and during the year or two which preceded its outbreak the most trivial incident might have precipitated it.

There is no halfway abiding-place between absolute peace and absolute militarism. If the nation will not listen to good counsel and establish the conditions of the former, it must accept the burdens and oppressions of the latter.

CHAPTER IV

NATIONAL SERVICE AND THIS WAR

IT is being frequently said that if the country had been wise enough to have taken Lord Roberts' advice and had adopted National Service before the war broke out, either there would have been no war or it would have been over by now with a complete victory for the Allies.

I do not believe that any one who has studied the details of the war or the diplomacy which preceded it can hold such an opinion. All the facts show that the German military authorities did not consider that we could trouble them except upon the sea, and they held that opinion, not because our Army was small but because they did not believe in our military genius. Moreover, they apparently were not sure until the last moment that we would come in at all, and that uncertainty would not have been removed had our Army been large or small. A diplomatic and military situation had been created in Europe which made war certain. We had either to turn back or go on

through war, and the arming of Great Britain in 1911 or 1912[1] would not only not have eased that situation but might have hastened the crisis. Whatever view may be taken of the origins of the war and of action that might have prevented it, one thing is clear, and that is that more military preparations would not have secured peace. Accumulating armaments gradually drove home the conviction into the minds of all the peoples that they were meant to be used, and as these accumulations went on they pushed into the background all agencies for and possibilities of peace. They were challenges, not securities.

If no military preparations could have prevented the war, might they not have changed its course, shortened it, and made its ending more decisive in our interests? Obviously had we put an army of 1,000,000 into the field in August and September 1914 instead of one of 160,000, events would not have been the same as they have been. Our casualties would have been much heavier during the first year, the costs would have been much greater, our munition supply much less, our industrial output greatly curtailed, and our financial staying power substantially diminished. All the earlier moves would have been intensified,

[1] If Lord Roberts had been listened to much earlier than this the European chaos might have been greater than even it is, and France might have been an enemy instead of an Ally.

but that does not mean that events would have been better for us.

The course of the war as we have experienced it has been that Germany played for a "knock-out" blow and failed, that France and Russia presented a retreating front which yielded like elastic but did not break, which steadily tightened and finally began to advance again. Our part was to keep the seas and to finance the two conscript Powers whilst they were resisting the energetic blows of the enemy. By and by we were to come in with millions of men when the enemy's first blow was spent, and when fresh troops were to decide the military issues. That is a strategy balanced in its parts and rationally complete and co-ordinated —a strategy the success of which events are proving. In war, when so much depends on chance and victory anyhow is all that is wanted, it is nothing more than a vain pastime to sit down and imagine how much different things would have been had this and that been done and not that and this; and this pastime is all the more vain when experience has shown that the apparent shortcomings complained of have contributed tremendously to the success which has been won. For it is plain to every one that had we had National Service before the war our contribution to the campaigns would not have been all that we have given plus something extra, but something quite different altogether.

I believe that a detailed examination of what has actually happened shows quite conclusively that the services which this country has rendered to the Alliance have been far more useful than if our first Expeditionary Force had consisted of a million men.

Had we exchanged industrial and financial help for military help what might have happened? The German "knock-out" blow would have been met by a "knock-out" blow. The reply would have failed, and the forcing of an early issue would have been to the advantage of the German military machine, which, owing to its interior position, would have benefited by rapid issues. So much so is that the case that it is more than likely that a more aggressive military strategy on the part of France and ourselves at the beginning of the war (Russia could not have been more aggressive) would have meant our ultimate defeat. As it turns out, the fact of the country having rejected Lord Roberts is the reason why this war cannot end in a German victory, because that rejection has meant that all the resources of the Allies have been poured into the fight in such ways and at such times as enabled each to give its maximum service to the combination.

If we were to build up theoretically a combination of Powers which ought to be unvanquishable, we would construct something like the Entente,

which has a vast population, a mobilized army sufficient for defence, enormous financial and industrial reserves. But no sane man, having got such a combination, would ever think of making its war preparations military alone, or of making the contribution of each of the Allies uniform. Its strength and invincibility lie in the variety of its essential services, and to make it militarist throughout would be to weaken it. The strategy it would devise would not be that of the "knock-out" blow. It would open on the defensive and, with its mind fixed upon all the moves leading up to success, it would not trouble if part of its territory were in the occupation of the enemy. From a purely military point of view that has its advantages, as is seen to-day when we compare the state of public opinion in France and Germany respectively. It is a great disadvantage to the German military powers that no part of their country is in the hands of the enemy, because it leaves them weak in public opinion. Through the demoralization of its enemy this theoretical combination would march to success. Such a strategy gives the greatest security of success and entails a minimum of loss, but that is exactly the strategy which would have been impossible if those who favour National Service had had their way. Paradoxical though it may seem, it is literally true to say that had we as a member of the Entente made more military pre-

parations for war we should have run greater risks of defeat than we have done. It is really not paradoxical at all, because it is only an experience of the fact that the maximum efficiency of a combination, whether it be a football team or an alliance of States, depends upon differentiation and not uniformity of function.

Thus events have turned out. Chance—for it is nothing more than chance—has been favourable to us. We cannot flatter ourselves that we designed it because we foresaw it.

> All may be well, tho' if God sort it so
> 'Tis more than we deserve.

But I am pointing out in this book that when the war is over this country is likely to be driven into more militarism, and it may be asked whether that argument is not inconsistent with this chapter. It is not. The character of our present Alliance is lucky for us, but it would indeed be a foolish nation that would trust everything to chance because it was once favoured by good fortune.

If we were sure of allies who would put great armies into the field whilst we were financing them and training our own, we might maintain our present policy. But we can never be sure of such allies; we can never be sure where national interests are to lie ten years ahead. The history of Europe is a kaleidoscope of changing allies. Besides, the

reason why the country was wise enough to reject Lord Roberts was that it did not believe that National Service was necessary for National Defence. Its decision had nothing to do with the strategy of the Allies. A nation's military policy will always be determined primarily by considerations of self-defence, and I am perfectly sure of this, that even were the argument in this chapter accepted by every rationally minded man in the country, if it were believed that there would be another war in ten years, the crowd mind would be so moved by fear and be so reluctant to take what it would call the "risk" of finding an Alliance so favourable as that of which we are now part, that it would call for the policy of the German State, seek to combine military with industrial functions, and prepare for a strategy of offence. The people of a State will always be moved by the desire to be self-contained in their means of defence, because an essential characteristic of the military idea is that no State can really trust another, but must always be prepared to stand alone or seek new friends.

Moreover, it is also doubtful if the other Allies would agree to our part. There are risks in it for them too, and when fear is abroad and the military mind is set to deal with it that mind will move in accordance with its own notions and will think of narrowly strict military equipment.

Thus we have the apparent paradox of, on the one hand, the certainty that National Service would not have prevented the war but would have diminished our chances of coming well out of it, and, on the other, the equal certainty that the war is creating political conditions and national frames of mind which, when peace comes, will make some form of conscription highly probable. The dilemma is the dilemma of militarism, which is created to give a sense of security and to defend, whereas its very existence keeps fear alive and adds to danger.

CHAPTER V

AN "ENFORCED" PEACE

AT this point it is necessary to discuss the movement which has been founded in America, and which has many advocates in this country, to enforce peace by an armed union of nations.

The proposal is that the leagued nations should agree to submit all differences to arbitration, that they should at the same time maintain effective armies, and that these armies should be available for the punishment of any nation which violates the basis of agreement.[1] That this is an advance

[1] An extract from the speech delivered at the inaugural meeting of the league by Mr. Hamilton Holt, editor of the American *Independent*, may be given as an indication of what is in the mind of the promoters of this League :—

"Now, suppose a League of Peace is established. Suppose the majority of the Great Powers—all the Great Powers if we can get them—should join such a League. The small Powers would have to come in for protection. Suppose the Great Powers, or the majority of them, had a standing army, we will say, of two million men. Suppose Russia stays outside of the League and has a standing army of a million men. The League, even if they thought that Russia was likely to attack it, could reduce its force down to a million and a quarter, or a million and a half, and still protect itself against Russia. But what will be happening in the

upon the present state of affairs and upon the Balance of Power policy may be agreed. That it is the best that should be aimed at now, in view of the horror with which this war will have filled the minds of the nations, is more doubtful. That it will bring about its purpose is also doubtful.

The hopes based upon such a union of States are, however, by no means unimportant or not worth some effort to fulfil. They are that, granting that militarism will survive this war, it ought to be controlled and curbed by co-operative legal action, and not left to be played with or gambled with by national egotism or self-will. A State using military power will then be treated as a

meantime in Russia? Will not the Liberals notice that the members of the League are enjoying greater protection for less taxes, and are attempting all sorts of co-operative experiments, perhaps even Free Trade, as did our States under our Constitution? They will forthwith begin to bring pressure to bear upon the Russian Government, until finally Russia will apply for membership in the League. Then, when Russia enters, there can be a second *pro rata* reduction of the forces of the League down to the size of the next great nation outside, and, when that nation comes in, there will be another *pro rata* reduction, and so on down and down, until finally a mere international police maintains the peace of the earth, under a Federal form of government, with legislative, judicial, and executive branches. This is the theory of the League of Peace."

The words and the ideas of this pronouncement show the unreality of the conception which the League has of the nature of arms and of diplomacy. The story belongs to the fairy order. It assumes a simplicity of motive and a removal of difficulties which is not in accordance with reality.

dangerous citizen is and will be faced by organized authority. Thus, "the armed anarchy which preceded and led up to the war" will be controlled by an armed order, and the Ishmael who would strike will know that he will have to reckon with a combination of socially minded States who are ready to strike back and to strike all together.

Whatever we may hope for ultimately, after the war the arrangements between nations for securing peace must be made by Governments, and however much we may distrust them we ought to help them in making it difficult for themselves to fight each other again.

Also, it is argued, the mere coming together of States in this close way will begin the habit of rational negotiation, and of talking difficulties over in council with others, and that, as militarism is the expression of a frame of mind destroyed by that habit, this union of nations will gradually evolve into disarmed nations.

As I have said, if the peoples of the Great Powers of the world are unprepared for a further advance in common sense, this proposal may be an improvement on the existing state of affairs. But it is not without its special dangers, which will appear big or small according as our confidence in existing Governments is weak or strong. The whole anti-militarist section in Europe and America is not agreed as to how much confidence

can be placed in existing Governments. One wing accepts them and believes that, with some changes in political opinion, Foreign Offices as we know them, industrial rivalries, scrambling for markets, can be controlled; another wing regards the happenings of the past two years as the final proof that existing governing interests, classes, and points of view are incapable of maintaining peace even when they are doing their feeble best to that end, and this wing bases its hopes of the future solely on the intelligence and determination of a popular international movement which will not only control but change the existing machinery of Foreign Offices. If the peace of the world is to be maintained these two wings must co-operate, each doing its own work and contributing to the common gain whatever practical results may be achieved. Therefore, even if we cannot all support this League, our critical attitude to it ought not to amount to active hostility *unless it were to take up the position that it is a sufficient end in itself.*

From the standpoints of this latter school of opinion, the League to Enforce Peace contains in itself all the evils of militarism, and this school doubts if any effort to control these evils can in the end succeed.

This new Union of nations, it must be assumed, will be managed just as existing alliances are managed, for it does not propose to make any

of the changes in international relations which I think essential. It is a League of the old order of national policy, not of the new. Within the Union there will be alliances and understandings, co-operations and rivalries. Outside it there will be the disputes of diplomacies and capitalism, the problems of markets, the campaigns of politicians, the unremoved fears and suspicions of nations. The Union itself will be controlled by the governing authorities of the nations, from whose point of view its activities will be conducted. It might even become a menace to liberty like a new Holy Alliance. It will certainly have all the small nations at its mercy, and whilst presumably it would suppress rebellion, it would have no power to deal with the demands of subject peoples striving for liberty.

The handing over of the issues of peace and war to an international committee of the governing classes gives no security to the people that the forces of the world will be used only in causes of righteousness and liberty ; the creation of a great international machine controlling the armies of the world is no guarantee of peace ; militarism under an international council would be deprived of none of its national menace to democracy—the liberty of the subject, the freedom of labour from military interference in times of industrial dispute, and so on ; and finally, an international agreement based

upon efficient national armies would tend to perpetuate the belief that armies are necessary for security—the very assumption which I believe is at the root of our international troubles.

If nations made war without any purpose except the mere making of war, the League might prevent war. But nations do not do this. We can prove that war never pays, that it is brutal destruction, that it is tremendously risky, and there will be war all the same. The great eruption of passion and enthusiasm which attends the outbreak of all wars will set at defiance all leagues for peace and all arbitration courts so long as that eruption has the armed force at its hand through which to express itself. A national military organization backed up by a military diplomacy can always create a situation which will defy the intervention of courts of arbitration.

Moreover, the creation of such a Union presents great difficulties. It can easily be a mere thing of paper, like the Hague Conferences. Nations would be at liberty at any time to leave it, and their rulers, if backed by the Press, could satisfy their people that national interests compelled them to secede; majorities at any crisis might be influenced to give wrong decisions; the practical impossibility of saying what is the military efficiency of a nation at any given moment would always make the military programmes of such a League un-

certain, for the mere numbers of a standing army are only one of the elements in military efficiency. Rapidity of mobilization, the strategic value of railways, the training of nominally unarmed citizens, the character of the armaments, the amount of reserve munitions, the organization of the industries of a country are all vital considerations in war, and these no League can control. So far short of the best does this proposal fall that, in view of the reaction against war which this war will bring, every one who wishes to put an end to war for ever between civilized and law-abiding nations should strive for something more satisfactory and decisive than this.

If, however, it be argued that this Union presupposes that the people will take a close and intelligent interest in their international affairs, and that they will never again put themselves in the hands of military and diplomatic classes to mortgage their honour and accept responsibilities for them behind their backs, then that assumption supports much more drastic steps than the formation of such a Union. If the people are so enlightened as to protect their interests within such a Union, if they are so vigilant as to prevent its being captured by the classes and interests and motives and policies which now make wars, they do not require it at all. They will end the very conditions which make such a Union an advance

upon the existing system of alliances and armaments.

There is one danger to the American democracy in particular associated with this League. To America it means "preparedness," which is but a rechristening of the old European error that peace is maintained by armaments, and that national defence means the organization of force. Now, the object of American preparedness is not very clear, but two consequences are indisputable. In existing frames of mind it will be disturbing to Canada, which may reply, and thus the military grip on the world will be strengthened and national insecurity increased. It will also increase the aggressive power of United States finance, especially on the American continent, and will lay United States policy more open than ever to the designs of the great financial houses. Whatever may be said in Europe in favour of such a League, nothing can be said in its favour in America, unless it is argued that in order to help to emancipate the Old World from militarism, the New World should put its neck under the military yoke.

My contention is that so long as the people are kept apart as they now are, so long as the kind of national policies which are now pursued continue, so long will the causes of war operate, and no mechanical contrivance of a Union of Nations or of legal arbitration can protect civilization against

war; and further, that so long as these things last, any machinery controlling military power can be captured by the war-making interests and instincts. It is impossible to conceive of peace secured by courts of arbitration or by any other means so long as efficiently trained troops and an army organization are at the disposal of Governments. The currents of tendency making for war will run in new directions perhaps for a little while to come, but they will run all the same. We must not let our anchors drag if we can help it. The ground we hold is that the problem of defence is not how to protect ourselves by force against enmity, but how to remove enmity.

CHAPTER VI

NATIONAL DEFENCE AND CONSCRIPTION

THIS war will leave Great Britain with new frontiers. We thought that we started it as an island; we shall certainly issue from it as a continental Power. The Channel and North Sea are no longer our borders. It is not rhetoric but sober common sense to say that our soldiers have been fighting on the British frontiers in France and Flanders. The frontiers of nations in alliance are not those of the separate nations, but those of the alliance. The security of each is the security of the whole. The military frontier of a nation is very often outside itself.

When the war is over every effort will be made to maintain an Alliance, for we have deliberately ended the chapter of independent action and of a distinctly national world policy. The syndicate has come into politics as well as into industry. An economic war will follow, not merely to punish Germany but to keep the Alliance with France and Russia. Whether an economic alliance is good political business or not I do not discuss here. I

believe it is very bad political and military business. Its difficulties have been shown in our own Empire, and they will not be minimized when foreign States come in. The economic market and the channels of economic exchange cannot be coerced to suit the conveniences of military plans or of political unions, except at heavy cost and with much irritation. Neither the dangers nor the practical problems of an economic war after the war have been worked out. We are acting on a mere aggressive emotion.

What I am concerned with is to point out that after the war the military meaning of national security will not be what it was before the war, when it was the prevention of invasion. It will be that with the maintenance of the existing Alliance in addition, with its—to us—extended frontiers and increased responsibilities. Our military necessities have thus increased a great deal. I well remember that in course of conversation with an important personage some years before the war he remarked that the military road from Berlin to St. Petersburg lay through Belgium and Paris. That road has now been extended to London. To-day we seem to be assuming that when the war is over we can return to our insularity, and that, having put forth our great military effort, we can go back to 1914, so far as our military position is concerned. That is a mistake. We have changed

all that. What we have had to defend during the war we shall have to prepare to defend during peace, because what was in jeopardy these two years will be in jeopardy again. National security maintained by force does not mean fighting only, but also training to fight.

Hence it is that the military problem which we once had to face, and which led to the Haldane reorganization of the Army, is now completely changed. This war has proved that in a European conflict in which we are concerned our responsibilities cannot be limited to an overwhelming naval strength, a small Expeditionary Force, and a Home Defence army of volunteers. National defence now means to Great Britain a military as well as a naval power to strike. An Expeditionary Force of 160,000 men is as much a matter of ancient history as a force armed with bows and arrows transported in fishing-boats. Jaurès' forecast regarding the evolution of the Haldane reorganization has been fulfilled.

Moreover, one new element has been added to the fighting fields—the air—and another has been transformed—the sea—by the submarine. Both of these revolutionize the military strategy for the defence of Great Britain. Our system was scrapped within the first months of the fighting. We went through months of futilities—imposed upon us perhaps by political expediency—when we appealed for recruits

by posters of doubtful taste and dignity and recruiting speeches of more than doubtful intelligence and accuracy. Finally we came to the inevitable rock face of conscription. We trembled and shilly-shallied. Our rulers gave pledges that it was to be "thus far and no farther." The pledges were broken. It was "all the way." Canute went down to Southampton to prove the folly of his flattering councillors who told him that the advancing tide would obey him. To-day Canute assures his subjects that he is master over the waters. The Canute of to-day will meet with the same experience as the councillors of yesterday.

One pledge still remains unbroken—because nothing has yet clashed with it. Conscription is only for the war, we were told. That pledge, however, is likely to go with the others. It was given without thought of the new position in which the war will leave the country; it was given on the assumption that England after the war will bear the same relationship to the Continent which the people supposed it bore before the war. That is not to be so. Great Britain will remain in a continental alliance. The existing one may not last; indeed, it is not likely to last. The war will be followed by an active diplomacy inspired by the following amongst other motives. The Central European Powers will strive to form a new combination, for even a democratic Germany is likely to have

memories as bitter as a democratic France had after the Franco-German War. The aristocratic and autocratic classes of the various nationalities will not continue to support an Alliance which will tend to increase the power of democracy in Europe, and the attempt to carry out the policy of the Paris Economic Conference will strengthen their hands. The new map of Europe, with perhaps Russia in possession of the Dardanelles and Constantinople, will reopen the problems of a Balance of Power and re-form the distribution of national fear and jealousy. The present Allies will, when peace comes, scrutinize the position in which the war has left them, and some little discord is certain to arise. Coalition wars have had unsatisfactory peace endings ; there are always too many interests to placate and too many weak points to defend against the diplomatic cunning of enemies.

In this new diplomacy Great Britain will appear as a military Power, and British interests will have to be defended by a British Army. We shall never again contemplate a war without an Army of decisive strength, trained, equipped, and officered. Every motive which was used on recruiting platforms, every phrase of the appeals that the nation should be defended, will continue to operate in the defensive preparations of the peace, and the universal military service of war-time will have to be continued when the war is over. There may be a year

or two of a lull of exhaustion when the people are confident in the effect of their victories, but the old order will reassert itself, the old politics will produce their fears and rivalries, and the State, trusting to its military strength, will have to demand of its manhood that they become trained in the art of war.

The annual meeting of the National Service League was held on the 17th August, 1916, when Lord Milner spoke thus from the chair :—

> It was impossible to carry on a propaganda in favour of a system which had already been adopted. On the other hand, it was impossible to think of dissolving so long as the question was open whether the principles for which they stood and for which a temporary triumph had been achieved were to be permanently accepted or to be thrown over again after the end of the war. They were bound to keep as quiet as they could at the present time, but they were equally bound to "keep their powder dry" in case it might hereafter be required.
>
> Personally he had a hope that it might never be necessary for them to become again active propagandists of National Service, because the wonderful success which had attended the adoption of their principles was calculated to commend them to the nation in such a way that they would never be abandoned. That was his personal hope and belief, but, of course, they could not count on that, and must be ready and, as a body, keep together.

The old kind of opposition may be put up to this propaganda by men who accept the Paris Conference decisions, and who have not a word of criticism to offer against the foreign policy of the country before the war and who will return to a

belief in voluntaryism in raising armies of defence. It will be ineffective. For unless this country emerges from the war with a new foreign policy of peace and a new conception of national defence the experience of war will drive the nation into compulsory military service, for the needs which drove us to adopt it temporarily this year will continue through the peace.

CHAPTER VII

THE MILITARY NATION

LET us disentangle our minds for a moment from the events that are now crowding thick upon us and take a wider survey.

After the French Revolution war entered upon a new phase of its development which is only still in process of evolution. By the end of the eighteenth century war had become an affair of armies, not of peoples, and, as has been said, a battle or a siege was just a form of a diplomatic note delivered by one ruler to another. When the French Republic was challenged by the rulers of Europe, they marched against it with their old armies. But the challenge was to the French people, and the French people armed themselves to resist it. Thus the modern national war began. The French armed nation was successful in defending itself, and then proceeded, with Napoleon at its head, to threaten the peoples of Europe. The peoples that were threatened responded as the French themselves had done, and Prussia, "without either money or credit, and with a population re-

duced by one-half, took the field with an Army twice as strong as in 1806." This revolutionized modern war. It brought in the people as well as the rulers. It established the practice of conscription. It made available for military operations the unlimited resources of the State in men and credit and labour. It can end only with the most absolute control of men, women, and children, of workshops as well as of armies, of workpeople as well as of soldiers. "Thus, therefore," says Clausewitz, "the element of war, freed from all conventional restrictions, broke loose with all its natural force." It made a public opinion in war necessary. It raised fury in the public mind. It gave a new function to the Press. It made necessary the suppression of liberty to think and speak and criticize. To the mind of nations thus placed it made the imminence of war a constant assumption. As in the Dreyfus time, an insult to the Army became an insult to the nation; as in modern Prussia, a military officer was a sacred thing apart; as in Great Britain during this war, a whisper of reason became treason to the national will.

And it must be remembered that the sources from which all this sprang was "the necessity" which the Allies a hundred years ago imposed on France, and France imposed on Prussia, to defend themselves. The origin of the European militarism of to-day is national defence, not national aggression.

The uninterrupted growth of military power in Europe throughout the century is the inevitable evolution of a false policy.

The failure of Napoleon to land in England, and the isolated position of the country ever since, protected us until two years ago from this flood of change. Part of it washed over us during the South African War; it came in its fullness during this war. No sane man can believe that it will depart when this war is over. The country mixed up in twentieth-century military diplomacy and obligations cannot possibly return to an eighteenth-century Army or an eighteenth-century attitude to war.

We can now make peace permanent or prepare for war. There is no alternative obligation. If we prepare for war, it must be for a national war involving two things—a National Army and the cultivation and moulding of opinion by the military State. For no military State can allow the growth of opinion which cuts at its own foundations. Military patriotism will be taught in schools. Patronage on the one hand and coercion on the other will be applied to our Press to keep up such education amongst the masses. The military strain and burden upon Europe will now be enormously greater than it was between 1871 and 1914. For Germany did not reach the limits of military preparation, far as she went. On its purely military

side the war has shown the need of being prepared on the vastest and the minutest scale; on its political side it has proved the "military necessity" of creating an obedient and a muzzled people.

All the scientific modern military writers lay the greatest stress upon public opinion, and their thoughts are always stretching out to the final conclusion that democracy is treason to the State, that freedom to criticize and weaken the military machine and its necessities is treason to the nation. This war, described so grandiloquently as "a fight for the right and freedom," has conquered enormous territories of the mind and of States to militarism. We are witnessing a further stage in the evolution of nineteenth-century militarism, not an emancipation of twentieth-century liberty.

How the military mind is running is revealed in an interesting interview which the Russian General Skugarevski gave to the *Russkoe Slovo*, and which was reproduced in the Russian Supplement of *The Times* for the 29th July, 1916, under the heading "The Future War." "At the present time," he says, "it is possible fairly accurately to imagine the picture of the next war after this." It is to be more frightful than this, both as to scale and destructiveness. This war has brought into the field numbers of men and masses of munitions for which no State had made preparations. We shall begin our armament preparations

on the scale upon which this war ends them. "Humanity must at last learn how to prepare for war." This war has shown that a State will use 25 per cent. of its men for military operations. Allowing for sickness and other inefficiencies, that means that armies equal to 20 per cent. of the population will at once take the field. In ten years, therefore, the Russian Army will number 40,000,000, the German one about 20,000,000. The Russians will require 300,000 officers, who will have to be provided by a special form of conscription. It may be necessary to introduce industrial conscription for girls and childless widows, so that the places of workmen may be taken at once by women previously trained, and a supply of clothing, food, and munitions to the Army secured. The Army will be equipped with 100,000 guns, 1,000,000 Maxims, tens of thousands of motor-cars; 50,000,000 gun projectiles will have to be kept ready and 5,000,000 rifle cartridges. Each regiment will, in addition, have to be equipped with great numbers of portable machine-guns. The explosives used will be deadly in the extreme, and a tremendous advance will be made in the mechanism of rifles. There will be thousands of dirigibles and tens, if not hundreds, of thousands of aeroplanes. The daily cost of the new war on the Russian scale will be at least £20,000,000. The peace footing of the Russian Army will be

2,000,000 to 3,000,000 men, and the annual cost will be about £100,000,000. Everything will have to be planned during the intervening peace, and, in preparation for the war, the labour and the industry of the nation will have to be controlled and organized.

We need not pin ourselves to details. The general accuracy of this forecast is good enough. In its evolution militarism is grasping the whole life of the nation; everything has to be subordinate to it; within the net it is casting, every activity and service must be caught because all are necessary. Those who are trusting that the pains and losses inflicted by this war will end war are building their houses upon sand. The memory of pain and loss passes, and a new generation arises which has not the memory at all. But the menace and the spirit of militarism and of armed force endures. The permanent memory of these years will be the need of the most thorough preparation. This war drove us pell-mell out of voluntaryism into compulsion, both military and industrial, and we shall begin in peace, not where we were in August 1914 but at the point to which the war brought us.[1]

[1] After I had finished this book I read Naumann's *Central Europe*, a book which in every page, argument, and proposal shows the soundness of my position. Here there is no thought of a settled peace. The war has made the nations more aggressive and more self-willed. "It is not to be supposed that at the conclusion of the war the long jubilee years of an everlasting

Whether this is to happen or not, says General Skugarevski, depends upon the peace. With that we shall all agree, but we shall disagree as to what kind of peace will avoid this horror and what kind of one will make it our inevitable doom. The important thing for the moment to remember is that every responsible Government is assuming that a state of incipient war will follow the ending of present hostilities, and this will undoubtedly happen unless the people determine otherwise.

peace will begin ! . . . The war will leave behind it an immense number of unsolved problems, both new and old, and will lead to disillusionments which will express themselves in extensive armaments. All the War Ministers, General Staffs and Admiralties will ponder over the lessons of the past war, technical skill will contrive yet newer weapons, frontier fortifications will be made still wider and, above all, longer. Is it really credible that in such an atmosphere the isolated State can remain any longer in isolation?" (p. 7). Of the economic war after the war he says: "It is no theoretical academic demand but is a practical precept, and its chief supporters must be the Ministers of War on both sides" (p. 174). Further: "It will not only be Central Europe that will emerge from the war with schemes for equipment and defence, but all the other States as well. Even a growing inclination among the people towards peace can do little to alter this steady preparation for coming wars" (p. 179).

CHAPTER VIII

A DEMOCRATIC GERMANY AND PEACE

THE hope is that Germany may become democratic —perhaps a republic—as the result of the war, but I see no signs of the political genius which is handling the position with that tact which might induce the Germans to translate military defeat into a pacific democracy. We can help the Germans to do that, and we are doing the very opposite. We seem to forget that the German people may rid themselves of the Hohenzollerns and the Junkers, as the French rid themselves of their Emperor in 1871, without wishing to forget the war. The passionate hate with which it is being conducted, the flinging about of insults, the insistence that every crime committed by an army is a badge of the spirit of the whole nation, is but sowing the wind from which the whirlwind is reaped. And both sides are busy with this evil work.

The problem which Germany presents to us is as follows : We have either to exterminate it altogether or we have to make peace with it. If we do not exterminate it we retain the antagonism of a people

of great energy, great mental power, great industrial enterprise, great organizing capacity, great patience, a people, moreover, prolific in numbers. Hampering them either by political policy or economic manipulation is petty and futile : it only keeps their enmity virulent. If our aim is to crush and keep down, that spells extermination, for there is no halfway resting-place. We cannot face, either alone or in alliance, a generation of studied repression. Every economic war that has been fought between States only shows the futility of those who enter upon it.[1] A perpetual blockade is impossible, and no political or economic means have yet been devised for keeping an industrial country out of the important markets of the world. A country which has something to sell will find some one to buy.

On the other hand, we may make Germany a co-operator in the keeping of European peace. We may relieve Europe of the menace of German militarism and organized force, of that aggressive and self-conscious German nationalism which threatened to domineer over the other nations ; and at the same time we may help to bring a feeling of freedom and relief to the masses of Germans themselves. We can do something of the same kind for ourselves as well. But the methods we are adopting to keep our people in a fighting spirit—the enflaming of passion and the maintenance of a squabbling and

[1] See *Modern Tariff History*, by Percy Ashley.

stupid hate—threaten to defeat this. We are acting as though we deliberately wished to compel Germany to throw back in our teeth any benefits of a political kind which the war may offer to her. We are making the German people a disturbing factor in Europe, irrespective of whether democracy or militarism, the citizen or the soldier, rules in Germany. And, as I have said, the fault is not all on our side.

This is no question of saving the face of Germany, but of studying a problem and devising a solution for it. We can fight this war to an absolute military conclusion irrespective of consequences, one of the most important of which will be its effect upon the future peace of Europe ; or we can fight it with our eye fixed steadily upon its political results. We cannot do both, and nothing will be more disastrous, or will be condemned more emphatically by its consequences, than a policy (or, to write more accurately, a want of policy) which expects political results from military operations that have hitherto always brought the opposite of these results.

This war has shown that if nationalism is roused every other political impulse is swept out of people's minds. In peace times we heard much of class wars, of the capitalist being the only enemy, of patriotism being a delusion of a past age. When the war came the men who had been the most unbalanced and loud-mouthed in preaching these

doctrines were blown farthest to the other extreme. Those to whom I used to protest that they were going too far, and only raising unnecessary prejudices amongst thinking people owing to gratuitous and somewhat ignorant attacks on patriotism, clothed themselves in their national flags and outdid the most Jingo of their old opponents. The Hervés of all nations are a warning that ought not to be forgotten. The German democracy is German, jealous of its national name, and will be prevented from purging itself from the blood of this war only by the attacks of foreigners.

The mere establishment of democracy in Germany will not therefore save us from having to reap the whirlwind if we now sow the wind.

The greatest weakness of democracy is that it will not think and act for itself. A race that has been conquered and kept subordinate develops the vices and virtues of subordination, and the masses and their leaders cannot in a day free themselves from the mental inheritance of subordination which their ancestors who hewed wood and drew water handed to them. When this war broke out, it was seen at once how sound were the instincts of the people and how ill-equipped were their minds. Every nation was led by its rulers, every people took up the rôle assigned to it in the military scheme. During the war the Press, whose chief work was to keep the fires of passion well stoked and blazing, published

absurdities, contradicted itself, palmed off the most palpable nonsense upon the people, but the people's critical intelligence had gone to sleep. Deception was never detected because there was no memory. Thus every nation sincerely believed that it was defending itself, and that the enemy had been planning and preparing for Armageddon for years; during the war, every people believed in the cruelties of the other; newspaper readers knew that the censor was at work, but never paused to think what that meant as regards the news they were permitted to read every day. They must have seen that their papers were carefully selecting from enemy countries news and opinions to create prejudice, and not to reveal the real state of the enemy's mind; and yet there was no caution shown. The people believed and did not think.

We have, therefore, to face the future and form our opinions as to what is to happen with this fact firmly set in our minds, that in matters of national security—our own old "We-want-eight-and-we-won't-wait" agitation, for instance—people are not swayed by calm judgment, but by stormy emotion and by panic. Even under a republican Germany with a grievance and a tender memory, a German Delcassé backed by the popular German Press would be an instrument for breaking the peace of Europe. And he would do this not as an avowed aggressor. There will be plenty of "causes" left unsettled

in Europe after this war to give alliances an excuse for fighting—nay, even to drift alliances into war though they do not exactly wish it. I see no prospect of a final solution of Balkan difficulties ; I see no chance of a satisfactory settlement of Poland ; I see a grave menace in some of the proposed partitions of the Near East and Asia. Above all, I see no prospect of the racial enmity between Slav and Teuton being ended, no hope of removing from Europe by any of the policies now in vogue the dangers of the Pan-Slav and the Pan-Teuton conflict. A democratic Germany will, indeed, have no difficulty in finding many opportunities next generation to challenge the decision of this war and to write a sequel to it more congenial to the German spirit than the record that is now being made.

Happy, but profoundly mistaken, is the man who, taking up his newspaper every morning, reads of allied victories and sees in them the security of an abiding peace ; reads of German cruelties and believes that by crushing the nation and punishing the innocent and the guilty together, the responsible and the irresponsible in one sentence, he is to cut from our civilization the cancer which corrupts it. He neither diagnoses the disease nor understands the remedy. He is a quack and the victim of quacks. His emotion is good, but his common sense and judgment are far to seek. He is not only not ending Prussian or any other form of militarism :

he is handing himself over to the interests and the logic of events which make a continuation of militarism inevitable, and which will drag this country into the vortex. All that we see going on round us to-day, the opinions that are being expressed and the temper in which they are expressed, the policies that are being pursued and prepared for the coming of peace, make militarism an essential condition of national security, and continental alliances and counter-alliances necessary consequences.

It is true that our people have no intention of making this war the parent of militarism, and the words they use and the feelings which possess them are moral and pacific. The sermons they preach to themselves are as usual right, but there is a conduct as well as a sentiment of piety, and that is generally forgotten. Our good intentions sometimes become the very reason why we allow evil to be done.

One of the reasons for this is that when a nation is under the control of emotional piety it is apt to forget that it was ever under such a control before. But during wars it is always under such control. The Allies in the Napoleonic wars proclaimed their purpose to be "the reconstruction of the moral order," "the regeneration of the political system of Europe," the establishment of "an enduring peace founded on a just redistribution of political forces."

Nationality was to be preserved and respected, treaties were to be sacred documents, war was to be ended by arbitration and a Concert of Nations. The war was fought, the peoples suffered for their ideals, Napoleon was crushed, and none of the moral intentions were fulfilled. Revolutionary and Liberal ideas were repressed, and a book which by numerous examples of *suggestio falsi* offers wrong explanations for this war [1] has to admit that when this great moral effort was ended "the rewards of that overthrow [Napoleon's], however, were reaped, not by the peoples but by the dynasties and State systems of the old *régime*."

The moral appeals to the nation to support the Crimean War were equally conspicuous. *The Times* of the 30th March, 1854, declared that we were fighting because "of the sympathy of this people with right against wrong" and to save Europe "from the predominance of a Power which has violated the faith of treaties and defies the opinion of the civilized world." The day before it had spoken of Russia as "menacing nothing less than the conquest of all Europe." Mr. Sidney Herbert said in the House of Commons (25th July, 1854) that we were fighting for "guarantees which might afford a prospect of peace for the future." The *Illustrated London News*, attacking America for not having come in on the side of the Allies, told that country,

[1] *The War and Democracy*, p. 31.

in words which those used to-day do but echo, that it ought to have been "unanimous in support of Great Britain and France in their disinterested and generous struggle against the wicked aggressor [Russia] and disturber of the world's repose." What harvest was reaped from these words and emotions? What guarantee of peace did the Crimean War give? Historians are unanimous about that. Their verdict is expressed by Sir Spencer Walpole :—

> From 1856 to 1878 the continent of Europe was afflicted with five great wars—the Franco-Austrian of 1859; the Danish of 1864, the Austro-Prussian of 1866, the Franco-German of 1870, and the Russo-Turkish of 1878—all of which can be lineally traced to the war of 1854.[1]

Lord Salisbury supported the historians when he said that in the Crimean War we had backed the wrong horse.

Wars can never be fought unless the peoples involved believe they are fighting for liberties or for some generous moral issue, but these great purposes have never been secured as the result of wars. There is nothing new in our spirit and our manifestos to-day. They have been published again and again. There will apparently be nothing new in the results. Nor is there anything new in our expectation that after the war our enlightened enemies will come to us in white robes of repentance, confessing that they were wrong all the time and we

[1] *Cambridge Modern History*, vol. xi. p. 324.

were right. There will be nothing new about the way in which that expectation will be falsified, and yet we base all our hopes of the German future upon some such confession after a good defeat !

Germany may become a republic next year. The Kaiser may be sent to St. Helena, the military castes to till fields and reap harvests. But unless statesmanship settles the peace there will be no peace, and unless public opinion accepts the terms with no hot feelings in its heart, a German democracy will polish and sharpen the sword and manipulate diplomacy as effectively as any other form of government. The Jingo may rage tumultuously and the people imagine a vain thing, but their ends will elude them. They will never gain what they desire. "Striking at one another desperately," said Jaurès in 1905 of Germany and Great Britain, "the two peoples would bruise and wound one another and splash the world with blood ; but neither of them would eliminate the other, and after an exhausting struggle they would still have to reckon with one another." This great problem of national conflict is not to be settled by those who stumbled into it in August 1914 for the first time and have acquired all the information they know about it by reading war news since then.

CHAPTER IX

MILITARISM AND DEMOCRACY

AGAIN let us widen our view from closely pressing events. War and militarism are not the result of the actions of rulers of evil intent. It is necessary so to stage the tragedy to-day before the crowds, so that the theatre—stalls and galleries together—may hiss the villains, call for the hangman in the final act, and be treated to a tableau with a gibbet in the centre and a crowd of the angelic virtues—the audience themselves—surrounding it to see that vengeance is done, and so be assured that God is in His heaven. That is war seen through the bloodshot eyes of war. That is romance. That is not how military statesmen look at it. That is neither the place nor the emotion they assign to it. To all the greater writers and thinkers on war, war is a mere inevitable incident in political policy, for which much has to be said by way of praise. It is by no means generally regarded as an evil. It is accepted as a good. Its training is advantageous. It licks the loafer into shape, it braces up the slacker, it makes

men obedient and fits them for working smoothly in a machine. In other words, it substitutes mechanical discipline for self-discipline, it gives us obedience for initiative. To democracy that is an evil; to autocracy it is a gain, because it removes the problem of training from education and assigns it to drill. But those who find good in war as a rule contemn democracy, and what they approve we naturally disapprove.[1]

Others, again, are quite open in their advocacy of militarism, on the ground that it will keep the working classes in their place and subordinate them to "higher" interests and commands. An utterance which gained some notoriety at the time was that of Colonel Sir Augustus FitzGeorge, son of the late Duke of Cambridge, when he said at the United Service Club on the 26th August, 1915, "Compulsory service is necessary at this

[1] I do not accept the argument that training in the Army is good. The open air is of course all to the good, and so are the walking and the exercise. But M. Daumont, the Editor of the *Libre Parole*, has written of France that its military system "has gone a long way towards ruining our peasantry, and to a large extent has already debased them. I deem the universal military service, as it is sometimes termed, one of the saddest sacrifices our country calls on us to bear." Lieutenant Bilse's descriptions of the effect of militarism on young German soldiers in his *Life in a Garrison Town* are also well known. The men of our Empire, outwardly improved in physique by the training they have had in camp, have other sides to present to us which we shall be in a better position to examine and discuss when peace comes.

time when the people are getting out of hand." But leaving such expressions of casual offensiveness out of account, there can be no doubt but that such opinions as that expressed by Lieutenant-Colonel W. H. Maxwell in the *Outlook* [1] are not only prevalent but represent a large body of intelligent and weighty opinion—even if we should call it prejudiced:—

> The abuse of personal freedom has reached its climax in this country. Trade Unionism—that shelter for slinking shirkers—is imperilling our existence, and by its action a rot of our national soul has set in. One remedy and one alone can eradicate this state of rot—martial law will cure it.

In a more general way Colonel Ross has expressed the military view. The great weakness of the British Army, he indicates with much truth, is that British militarism has always been subordinate to British liberty. The officer here is of no special account as in Germany—except for dances. And, therefore, if we are to be strong and well protected, our military must be granted increased respect in the country and authority in the State; it must have at its head a military man and not a civilian; representative government must not interfere with its mind or its preparations; military efficiency needs the establishment of autocratic government "in all primary questions, or those

[1] Quoted by Mr. Bruce Glasier in *Conscription*, p. 15 (Independent Labour Party, 1d.).

relating to war or the struggle for existence, and representative government in all secondary matters on which the comfort of the people depends."[1] So it must settle the framework of our Constitution. On similar lines we have opinions like that expressed by Professor Ridgway of Cambridge in his Presidential Address to the Classical Association in 1915, that a world of democratic States would be "a stagnant pool" in which no higher forms of life could live, and that humanity in a world of peace "would perish from its own physical and moral corruption."

This professorial utterance puts in an academic form an opinion and determination which were not at all uncommon before the war, and which were frightened by the menacing success of the Labour Party. The only way to prevent the capture of the State by the people was to make war. The French agents in Germany reported to Paris, according to the French official paper on the war, that the Prussian Junkers welcomed war because they were getting afraid of death duties, democracy, and Socialism.[2] In war the masses "substitute national passions for social aspirations,"[1] because war rouses the most instinctive fears of men. Whatever the immediate cause of a war may be, when it comes it compels some enemy to threaten

[1] *Representative Government and War*, p. 107.
[2] French Yellow Book, Document No. 5.

national existence and honour, and then the complete fabric of democratic gains and aspirations, built upon the foundations of national security, tumbles down to the ground. When the war is over, reaction has a breathing space, for the world in which democracy begins afresh to rebuild its habitations is a new and a strange one. Democratic experience has been buried deep under military emotions. Old opinions have to be revised, old principles have to be applied in new ways, democracy itself has been broken. So time is lost and the work of a generation wiped out. Reaction remains in possession until new democratic movements have been formed, programmes and policies revised, and leaders found. Thus the world drags on its weary way, the motto of reaction each generation being: "Sufficient unto the day is the opportunity thereof." A people requires to be revolutionary to the core to resist the strength which a war gives to reaction. Franchise reform very often follows wars. But then it is safe, because the democracy is in no mind to use its new powers, and being disorganized and having no certain and fixed aim, it cannot employ them to its own advantage.

We have been hitherto inclined to minimize the influence of such military and reactionary opinions as the above, just as we minimized the dangers of a war. But they have been very wide-

spread and have been found in high and influential places. Intellectually as well as practically militarism is antagonistic to the liberty for which democracy stands; it has to limit that liberty in its own self-interest, and it is used by other interests to the same purpose.[1]

The opinion of the soldier one understands and respects. The soldier desires the efficiency of his profession. Popular assumptions that national defence rests ultimately on force compel the soldier to study the organization of force, and he is driven to the Prussian conclusion. He naturally detests politics and politicians because their methods and psychology are poles asunder from his. He sees that the officer must be put on a pedestal, that military uniform should be a sacred garb. He wants no humanitarian humbug. The Clausewitz formula, "War is an act of violence which in its application knows no bounds," is honest. It has been formally accepted by the soldier of every nationality. His work is to kill, frighten, and destroy. His authority is not that of the State or the nation, but the War Council, which he demands should be composed of military men. International

[1] The story of the persecution of Mr. Bertrand Russell can be placed alongside the most obnoxious suppressions of civil liberty in Germany, and not suffer by the comparison. There will be a chapter in the history of this war on civil liberty, and it will read just as the similar chapter in the history of the Napoleonic wars reads.

law is a mere fiction "hardly worth mentioning." Treaties are only valid so long as convenient.[1] Might is to him right—at any rate, they are so mixed up that they cannot be distinguished. In the military mind, as Colonel Ross has said: "Might has taken the place of right, and should the destruction of homes and farms not prove sufficient, whole towns must be destroyed and the inhabitants must hang"; or as Lord Wolseley, dealing with another aspect of military moral psychology, has written in his *Soldier's Pocket-book*, that though public opinion condemns falsehood, detests the word "spy" and believes in honesty, "the man who acts upon that opinion in war had better sheathe his sword for ever." Similar expressions could be quoted through pages upon pages. They all prove that the professional military psychology in every country is precisely the same. There is no distinction in spirit between Prussian militarism and any other militarism. Openly by practice in Prussia, theoretically in Great Britain up to now, but now rapidly becoming practical, militarism challenges democracy, de-

[1] "Directly circumstances change—and they change constantly—the most solemn treaties are torn up, as Russia tore up the Treaty of Paris, or as Austria tore up the Treaty of Berlin. All history is full of torn-up treaties. And as it has been, so it will be. The European waste-paper basket is the place where all treaties eventually find their way" (Major Stewart Murray, *The Reality of War*, p. 110).

mands an independent existence in the democratic State, and claims a morality and a rationality all of its own. Jaurès never wrote a truer sentence than this—true not merely as a description of what had happened, but true as a warning of what must always happen in the nature of things: "Who is most menaced to-day by the military action of the generals, by the always glorified action of military repression? Who? The People."

Nor must we treat too lightly or too sentimentally the rationality of all this. These people believe that wars cannot be avoided. Wars are not brought about by Kaisers, but by nature. War, says Major Stewart Murray in his interesting and (granting his assumptions) profoundly true commentary on Clausewitz,[1] "is based on the essential fundamental characteristics of human nature, which do not alter." We can arbitrate on non-essentials, but we cannot arbitrate on honour. Here is the dilemma. Honour compels us to make war; we make it successfully, and our military victory forces the other side, which of course cannot accept a defeat on a point of honour, to devise how to make another appeal to the sword. That is the *reductio ad absurdum* of war as an incident, as well as a determining factor, in national policy. That *reductio ad absurdum* is, however, accepted by the militarists as "the inherent weak-

[1] *The Reality of War*, p. 68.

ness of human nature"; but a weakness which is seen, exposed, and can be provided against is not "inherent."

Let us honestly face the logic of facts, however. We base national security upon an army, and national security is psychologically an overmastering demand of civic human nature. So long as the fear of national insecurity is in people's minds, liberty and everything else must be limited by military efficiency, the soldier acquires a privileged place in the State, and the moral and intellectual requirements of his profession are accepted as a necessity. Thus arises the doctrine of "military necessity," which means that the military mind is allowed to create standards of moral action and political policy which accord with its own problem of how to make Might and Force triumphant. The evolution in the military ascendancy in States, extraordinary as its results are, is to be explained by the simplest and most obvious psychological processes. "I am an absolute necessity," argues the soldier, "and you must therefore allow me to create the political conditions under which I can do my work efficiently. If you do not do that, your blood be upon your own heads."

We can go on encouraging this idea by harbouring false views of international relations, by trusting our security to organized force instead of to

organized rationality, and by obscuring the facts and applying adjectives like " Prussian " to a spirit which is universal ; but the penalty we shall have to pay is that which is now being meted out to Germany.

How literally true it is that the people who trust to force will perish by force !

CHAPTER X

THE ARMY, THE STATE, AND LABOUR

I HAVE argued that in the political State militarism cannot be controlled by the true democratic will, but that when it is trusted it must dominate, and I have now to consider what its effects are upon the industrial State.

I am not to discuss here the industrial cost of conscription—the loss in ineffective and wasted labour, the burden imposed upon the young workmen, and so on—because that has been done elsewhere, and I wish in this study to confine my thoughts to the more political aspects of the problem. I simply note this important consideration in passing.[1]

Jaurès has not much to say about this, but his argument is that the Army, at any rate in France, has no will of its own. It is not something, as it is in Turkey, Greece, or Spain, which plots revolutions and takes an active part in government. In France it is obedient to the civil authority.

[1] Mr. Glasier discusses it in his pamphlet on *Conscription*, published by the Independent Labour Party.

It is a tool. It is something which the democracy can use for its own ends.

We are not very much interested in Cæsarism—the government by the Army—in Great Britain. Our fear is rather that the Army can always be used as a tool. The point which Jaurès made to allay the fears of the French democracy is one which we should make to rouse the suspicions of our people.

The Army is obedient. Universal military training means a nation under the discipline of officers, not a nation under the discipline of its own mind. Hence it is often argued that in a democratic State an Army is no menace. It obeys the rulers, the political chiefs, and therefore follows the popular will. Such is the argument.

This argument only rings the changes on the word "democracy" and makes it bear a meaning which does not belong to it. There is no State of any consequence to-day controlled by the interests of the industrial classes. This statement is not contradicted by the fact that in some nations there is manhood suffrage. The interests which control even democratic nations are those which are well organized, vigilant, and coherent—those which own the Press and the political machinery of the constituencies; those from whom Ministers are taken; the families which pay £400 a year to get their sons into the Diplomatic Service. The industrial classes are an influence more or less remote, especially

between elections, but are not a steady political authority. Thus the State is less democratic than the nation. Now, the Army is the servant of the State, not of the nation. That is the fundamental fact which we have to bear in mind. If this distinction between State and nation were removed by democratic Governments, international diplomacy would be so altered that armies would be altogether unnecessary. The whole problem would be solved ; it would not have to be settled by compromises and safeguards. It would not exist.

With Jaurès, we object to an Army which has a will of its own and makes rulers and revolutions ; but we also object to his Army which is a tool of the State, because the State uses the Army to support the interests which control the State.

Whilst the distinction between State and nation lasts, the industrial danger of the armed nation is real and pressing. The Army will be used for industrial purposes, especially in times of trade disputes. The best recent case is that of the French railway strike, the story of which is as follows : The French railway employees were conducting an agitation for Trade Union recognition in 1910, and those of the south obtained it ; but it was refused to those of the north, and in October they came out on strike, M. Briand, who came into political prominence as a syndicalist firebrand of the extreme type, had worked his way up the political ladder and was

then Premier. He instantly mobilized the Army and put it to running the trains. Thus Jacques left his engine one night as a Trade Unionist and stepped upon it next morning as a soldier under instructions to defeat himself as a Trade Unionist. Some who refused were punished by court-martial as soldiers. The strike was broken. That is a very simple form of industrial conscription which will no doubt be used frequently should the conflict between Labour and Capital in the future become severe and all attempts to solve it by peaceful means be defeated. A nation of conscripts is a nation of potential strike-breakers. Free labour associations under the French methods are unnecessary institutions.

Since the war broke out and conscription was established here, military service has been used to coerce workmen and punish Trade Unionists. Foremen have decided who have to be taken and who left. Men have been compelled to join the Army and have been sent back to work as soldiers. Cases are innumerable. Ministers did not mean it. When they pledged themselves that this would not happen, I do not believe they had any thought of making it happen. The true explanation is that militarism cannot be worked so as not to involve industrial conscription.[1]

[1] These are some interesting facts :—

Mr. Asquith's pledge to Labour deputation on January 12, 1916 : " I cannot imagine anything more monstrous than that

But the more common form of using the military is to overawe the workmen. Great Britain affords the best example of that. When the railway strike broke out here in 1911, the Home Office, under Mr. Winston Churchill, immediately put itself at the head of the military and in turn put the military at the disposal of the railway directors. Troops were put in possession of the lines and were paraded fully armed in front of the men. They were sent

advantage should be taken of this opportunity to introduce a method by which unscrupulous and unpatriotic employers would get additional power over workmen. I am not in favour of compulsion in regard to industrial work. I see no reason for it. I shall absolutely resist it to the last."—*Times. Mr. Bonar Law:* "There was no intention whatever in this Bill to introduce in any shape or form industrial conscription."—*Hansard*, p. 317, January 8, 1916.

Such was the intention. This is the experience :—

"Within a month of the passing of the Military Service Act there was a strike at Dundee. . . . What did the employer do? He did not use the ordinary methods of a dispute and fight it out. . . . He immediately reported these men to the military authorities, and they were called up under the Act."—*J. H. Thomas, M.P.* (*Hansard*, May 16, 1916). "A working party of 102 soldiers was supplied to the Llanelly Steel Company. These men . . . remain in the military service of the Crown, and are under military discipline. They receive no wages, but continue in receipt of their military emoluments."—*Dr. Addison, Ministry of Munitions* (*Hansard*, p. 671, August 7, 1916).

Mr. Robert Smillie, speaking at Edinburgh, stated that he had been informed of a case where a miner had been sent back to work in a mine, and had been told by an officer that he was to go back to a particular mine and stay in that mine, and that any disobedience would result in his being at once sent back to the Army.

to towns that had never asked for them and where their presence was regarded as an insult. Men returning in the dead of the night from negotiations designed to end the trouble found themselves held up by the secret movement of troops on the streets. By the end of the week the country was, in consequence, on the verge of the most serious civil discord. At the time the foreign situation was bad, owing to the difficulties about Morocco, and that restrained the Home Office and the State authorities and peace was brought about. Thus by a mere coincidence the country was undoubtedly saved from serious bloodshed and the workmen from a complete defeat.

The shooting of strikers during riotous disturbances arising out of strikes and lock-outs is still more common. Such shooting is generally ill-timed and the victims are as a rule innocent people. This violence does no good. It neither protects property nor allays passion. It takes place as a rule when local authorities lose their heads. But the military being at the beck and call of magistrates who are generally prejudiced against the workmen, and often interested in the issues of the dispute, is a grave disadvantage to the Unions and provokes men to excesses. The police forces are perfectly competent to deal with any trouble that may arise, especially if the local authorities were compelled to seek the co-operation of the leaders of the strikers to prevent disturbance. This would be far more

effective than bringing files of soldiers with ball cartridge in front of excited mobs. The military, however, are really used to end the strike and to punish for destroyed property, not to keep order. They are an industrial force, not a police one.

In this way the military—a citizen army with citizen officers—has been used in Switzerland, in Australia under a Labour Government, in South Africa under a Government which apparently had no sympathy with mine-owners, in France, in Germany, and in Russia.

An army is always a powerful weapon in the hands of Governments to destroy the chances of labour in a hard-fought industrial dispute. It is never used against capital, for in the nature of things it cannot be so used. The interest of capital is not of such a kind as would bring it into conflict with the military, even when it is in direct conflict with the law and ought to be in conflict with the police. A conscript nation puts special powers in the hands of capital to control labour and hamper its freedom, and that power has always been used whenever and wherever occasion has arisen.

But there is something more than this that has to be said. No line can be drawn between the camp and the workshop. An efficient military camp must have an obedient workshop behind it. Production of munitions, of food, clothing, and other necessities

is absolutely essential to an army, and an autocratic control of that production is necessary for the nation which leans upon force for its security. When the armies are called up the places of the enlisted men in field, mine, and workshop must be taken at once. This means the training of women during peace. No nation in the future can neglect this, for conscription has been proved by this war to be as necessary as regards tools as it is as regards arms. Function after function of the nation has to submit to be painted khaki, as the nation with increasing completeness organizes itself to defend itself by force. General Skugarevski is perfectly right. The military nations of the future must prepare their workshops for war. Those that are most thorough will train their women by a process of conscription, because the woman worker in the time of war is essential to the State. She is a reserve to be mobilized on the outbreak of war, and her mobilization requires preconcerted plans and preliminary training.

So, just as there is no distinction in actual fact between a policy of armed defence and offence, there is none between military and industrial conscription. The former cannot be worked without calling the latter to its aid.

CHAPTER XI

THE ARMY AND REVOLUTION

THERE are some Socialists and Trade Unionists in this country who advocate a citizen Army of a special kind which they do not hesitate to say they will use if they can for a special purpose. They would train all men in arms; the officers would come from the ranks, or, in any event, commissions would be open to the working classes; barrack discipline would not be rigid and the regimental aspect of militarism would be reduced to a minimum. Their idea is to train citizens in the use of arms and in military drill, organization, and cohesion, and their purpose is to defend the nation if need be against invasion, and to use force also if need be in industrial disputes. One of them is reported to have said, "We want to be able to meet armed force with armed force if the capitalists use it."

That method of social progress has no attractions for me; and the people of influence who are pushing universal military service can afford to smile at such a card up Labour's sleeve. They will

take care that if my friend gets his citizen Army he will not get his revolution as well. He will never get that card down his sleeve.

The idea that arms are a badge of liberty and an evidence of power and that they are useful to overawe rulers and secure domestic reform is an old revolutionary one. The armed nation used to appear in every revolutionary programme.[1] But that was before the franchise, which armed intelligent men with something far more powerful than a rifle and more deadly than a sword. "What is the use of liberty if we are not armed to protect it?" is as dead as Queen Anne as a piece of political wisdom. He who cannot use the vote cannot use the rifle, and to try to revive this ancient doctrine is putting the clock back. The armed nation will be the tool of the State. The Socialist who thunders one moment against the existing capitalist State, and demands the next that the nation ought to be armed, may fancy he is speaking with magnificent dash and thoroughness, but in reality he is only demanding that the worker should put his neck more securely into the yoke of capitalism, should impose upon himself a discipline and

[1] Nothing has been written in its favour that is better than Major Cartwright's *Ægis, or the Military Energies of the Constitution* (1804). The argument was appropriate to the time, but one has only to read the book to understand how the conditions of the more revolutionary section of political parties has changed since then.

obedience which stunt the free growth of the democratic spirit of initiative and freedom, and should hand himself over to an organization which, from its very nature, must be controlled by State authorities whom he as a soldier cannot disobey without incurring the direst penalties and punishments.

Revolution in some countries may yet be necessary to open out the road for freedom; but when it is successful it will only bring the workmen of such a country to the position now held by the workers of Great Britain, and at that point they will have to lay aside arms and tout for votes. There may be a lack of romantic heroism about this, but the part of the romantic hero is generally played by the Socialist who talks and poses. It is not real business.

Jaurès does make the point that when officers are drawn from the democracy the control of the Army will not be so completely in the hands of the State authorities. He discusses this very fully, but comes to the conclusion that Socialists and Trade Unionists should accept all the risks and take commissions. They will be able to use their power on behalf of the workers, and the capitalist will find, with them in authority, an Army not so pliable to the will of the State. But that means that the Army will then have a will of its own, and that there will be Army politics. No greater evil can befall the democratic State than this. Cæsarism, even

if it be inspired by democratic feelings, is an evil. The supreme power in the democratic State must be civil, and if that be bad it must be reformed or changed politically. The very worst way to remedy such a state of things is to create an Army which will have the power and the will to accept or reject orders from the duly constituted civil authority. The mutinous conspiracy of the Unionist officers at the Curragh Camp was bad, not because it was directed against a decision of Parliament which suited Liberal and Labour opinion, but because it was a conspiracy of officers and an interference of the Army as such in civil affairs. The whole of the Ulster movement is a splendid illustration of the evil which will arise if the Army, however wrong the decisions of Parliament may be, is taught to believe that it holds in its hands the power to thwart Parliament. The inherent objection to military rule is only intensified by the deliberate pursuit of a method of selecting officers which will give some promise that the Army will be used in an enfranchised nation on the side of democracy if democracy should have occasion to quarrel with its civil and representative rulers.

But the selection of officers from the lower classes is no guarantee that the Army will be democratized. An officer from whatever rank he is drawn is trained in his military job, and the vast majority of such men will take on the tinge of militarism,

will look upon politics and the State from militarist angles of vision, and allow their minds to be run into militarist moulds. Experience shows that there is no man more ready than he who has risen from the working class to adapt himself to the habits and point of view of other classes, and in the Army I believe it is true that the officer who has risen from the ranks has adopted to a special degree the mind and discipline of the soldier. The problem of how to make Cabinets representative in all their acts is a political and not a military one, and armed citizens cannot assist to solve it.

The Social Revolution, if made at all, must be made in the workshop and through the ballot-box, by the citizen himself changing his opinions and life, by the workman assuming more industrial power, and by the elector showing more political intelligence in the management of his affairs.

CHAPTER XII

THE GUARANTEE OF PEACE

My argument thus far has been :

1. National defence cannot be confined to defensive precautions, but must become an offensive if it is based upon military force, however that force is officered or constituted;

2. A military organization is a weapon in the hands of the State for industrial purposes, partly because the State is always less democratic than the nation, and partly because industrial warfare must always raise questions of national security and existence;

3. No line can be drawn between the military and the industrial order. The military authority must embrace the workshop because industrial production is necessary to an army. Military conscription must involve industrial conscription ; and

4. After this war, unless there is a complete change in the inspiration and control of international policy, Great Britain will have to accept, in addition to its special obligation to provide the most powerful Navy in Europe, the same military responsibility

as any other continental Power, and that means that conscription will have to be a peace expedient as well as a war necessity.

Two points still remain to be discussed. The first is guarantees of national safety, and, arising from that, the kind of peace which ought now to be striven for.

The Russian General Skugarevski, who gave the interview to which I have already referred, concluded his conversation with some remarkable opinions. When Germany has been subdued, he said, the States of Europe might agree, as has already been proposed at The Hague, to limit armaments. Then he remarked, "An international tribunal must at last acquire power." Finally, he made an important admission. What power? Is power only armed power? He goes on :—

> Some people think that this power can be defended only by the armed hand, whilst, since it is impossible to create a kind of international Hague army, the decisions of an international tribunal will be equivalent merely to "scraps of paper." No. The decisions of an international tribunal can rest, first, on the strength of public opinion.

The second foundation-stone of this power may be economic, according to General Skugarevski.

The guarantee of peace is educated public opinion, acting through a State or controlling a Government, and there is no other. Even a threatened economic war is of little consequence. That one

nation can punish another by refusing to trade with it is an idea which breaks down when examined in the details of its process. It assumes the false premises of Tariff Reform—viz. that political nations trade with each other, whereas trade is conducted only between certain individuals of the nations. If the economic punishment is meted out in a limited way, only certain persons and interests suffer, and these will not be the guilty persons or the offending interests; if it can be carried out to the extent of a general blockade, nobody but the poor will suffer for a long time, and interests that are really national will be untouched until the consequences of the blockade have spread upwards through society. The blockade purpose is to cause revolution by the starvation of the helpless ones of a nation. Whilst the economic war is in operation all the complicated channels through which international trade runs will have to be explored and drained of the trade of the offending nation, and this will not only mean much irritation amongst the injured interests of the other nations but much punishment of the people of all countries. The method is ineffective, inaccurate, and clumsy. On paper, it is a threat; in reality, it is an impossibility.

Let us concentrate our attention upon the real facts.

The only way to provide for national security is to remove the fears and arbitrate upon the mis-

understandings and rivalries which grow up into conflicts when armies are available and the possession of force is an inducement to rulers to be unbending. The problem, if apparently difficult to solve, is easy to state. It is this :—

No people wants to fight any other people. Public opinion in times of peace is always against war; it becomes warlike only when roused by the bugles of war, blowing from Foreign Offices, Ministries of War, and through newspapers. How are national disputes to be settled by the people before their passions are aroused? I have said that this is apparently difficult, but in reality the ease with which it can be done is the great obstacle to doing it. Foreign affairs in some mysterious way have been withdrawn from the light of the world. They are transacted in rooms with blinds drawn, with backstairs entrances and secret doors and waiting chambers. Upon them are employed spies, suborned agents, ambassadors whose business it is to cheat, and *finesse*. The whole corrupting system should be swept away. It stands like a dirty old slum area, full of vermin and disease, in the midst of a district cleared and improved. It belongs to the kind of evil which exists by leaning upon a similar evil which, in turn, exists by leaning upon it. Few seem to see that a kick at any of the supports will bring the whole offensive fabric down.

Supposing Mr. Asquith had informed both

Germany and ourselves in 1912 that the two countries had failed to come to an understanding, instead of assuring us that we were on terms of the most complete agreement, how different events would have been! Supposing it had been the habit of people to regard foreign relations as within the scope of democratic control, and our rulers had been afraid to commit the country's honour without sanction, again, how different things would have been! Even assuming that the German authorities were then bent on war, an open diplomacy on our part would have prevented the German people from being hoodwinked, would have rendered the rush to arms at the end of July 1914 impossible, and would have defeated the policy of the Governments to begin the war by persuading all their peoples that each was fighting a defensive battle. Or supposing I am too pacifically optimist and nothing could have prevented war, an honest statement of our dangers and an unmistakable proof that they were real would have led to preparation adequate to the risk.

I do not make the mistake of assuming that open diplomacy will remove the *causes* of war; I do say that it will enable these causes to dissipate themselves without an explosion. Secret diplomacy acts upon national rivalry as a confining chamber acts upon a high explosive. In the open the high explosive burns; in a confined place it explodes.

Capitalist rivalries, the spirit which animated our Tariff Reform campaigns, the need of national expansion, such as both Russia and Germany feel, will provide plenty of causes for future wars, but an open diplomacy will prevent these causes from generating disruptive force. The people and reasonableness will settle them as they arise.

There is no other guarantee of peace and national security. No army can give it; no treaty under existing conditions can give it. It can only be given by the people themselves insisting upon knowing to what their rulers are committing them and what game their diplomatists are playing and upon taking responsibility upon themselves. Everybody will not do this. Heaven help us if that were necessary! But many agencies of goodwill and intelligent political thought and action will do so, and that will suffice.

The argument I have been stating in this chapter was always present in Jaurès' mind when considering how far his military views were applicable to Great Britain. He believed, as I have already said, that we could do better than create a citizen force for national defence. In the English translation of his book appears the following significant pronouncement :— [1]

> There are two courses open to England as regards her foreign and colonial policy. By following the lines so ably laid down

[1] *Democracy and Military Service*, pp. 124–5.

by the advocates of peace—the Socialists, the Labour Party, the best and most courageous members of the Radical Party—England can play a decisive part in inducing Europe and the world at large to adopt a policy of peace. In that case she will grant far-reaching concessions—both political and social—to Egypt and to India, and will thus avert the revolts with which she is threatened. She will accept, she will herself propose, the abolition of the right to seize private property at sea ; and by thus weakening the power of naval war, she will do away with all danger of war being brought about by the economic rivalry between herself and Germany. By adopting the principle of arbitration as applicable to all international disputes, she will open up the way to progressive reduction of armaments. By such measures the economic forces both of England and of other countries will be enabled to follow their natural course, and the law of nations will easily be able so to extend its jurisdiction as to prevent industrial and mercantile rivalry from leading to fraud or violence.

England may, on the other hand, refuse to follow this wise and beneficent policy. And in that case the half-hearted measures elaborated by Mr. Haldane for the purpose of national defence will certainly not enable her to face the dangers which she foresees in the future—national and religious uprisings in Egypt and in India, and the dreaded conflict with Germany, whose naval force, growing day by day, threatens the coasts and, at any rate, the imagination of England.

Mr. Haldane's Territorial organization is one of those ingenious compromises which English statesmanship excels in creating. But it will probably not be able in the long run to withstand the varied attacks to which its complexity exposes it. If ever the danger of a world-wide war comes home to the masses of the English nation, the territorial system as it exists will probably be swamped.

The war has rendered some of the phrases in the above extract old, but the idea and argument behind them are as sound now as when they were published in 1910.

Should any one urge that we must arm because other people are arming and defend because other people are threatening, my reply is: It is not our business to content ourselves with allowing other people to take the initiative, and to consider ourselves wise in merely countering their moves; we ought to have a clearly mapped out policy to secure peace, and we ought to pursue it; if for the time being we are driven to do something that is not altogether in accord with it, we should recognize that we run great risks in doing so. But chiefly my reply is that this game of following an evil lead is one of life and death to the nations, because it is an endless game. The resort to militarism provided the conditions which make militarism necessary—more militarism and still more militarism, more danger and still more danger. The "practical" man whose vision is limited by his existing conditions and whose mind is satisfied by reflecting that disarmament is at present unpractical is, as usual, not practical at all. He is a passive dreamer. Arms have been proved by history to be the most unpractical of all expedients to secure either peace or justice. To go on trusting to old broken reeds is foolishness, not wisdom. By an effort of will we must become civilized men. Nothing else will be of any use. We are like a squirrel in a revolving cage; the faster we run, the faster we have to run. One day the nations will have the courage

and the wisdom to step out. The instant they do so they will find themselves in a peaceful world.

In every nation after this war there will be a specially keen interest in the causes and effects of militarism, and every nation will be willing to consider the subject of peace. Some nations will be dominated by the military spirit, perhaps because they are sulky and have scores to wipe off, perhaps because they are afraid. But in every nation there will be a clear-sighted peace party. If these parties, acting internationally, are not strong enough to hold militarism in absolute check and to impose upon it an increasing weakening, they must subordinate many differences in their own domestic politics in order to strengthen international democratic organizations. The great political issues of this war will be fought out after the war ends, not by it, nor during it. A strong united effort will be required in which enlightened opinion in the various nations must be in the very closest communion, must act both officially and unofficially on arranged plans in the separate States, must devise and support policies to strengthen the pacific movements in each country, and must create both a national and international political organization which in every country will act in unity. The days of peace picnics and polite and meaningless speeches are over. They have been empty. Energy that is sleepless and a policy which is pursued from day

to day and with complete detail, watching every move in the diplomatic game and with a thoroughly efficient Intelligence Department and Parliamentary policy, are now required if the men who have died for us are not to have died in vain.

CHAPTER XIII

THE POLITICS OF PEACE

MEANWHILE we must consider the politics of peace, for peace is a political and not a military problem. Amongst the truths that history teaches with a conclusiveness which cannot be questioned is that a peace made by military victors in the spirit of military victors is no peace at all. To-day we are deluded by such catch-penny phrases as "a premature peace," "no patched-up peace," and so on. They are quite meaningless and very delusive. They imply the doctrine, which I have said history proves to be wrong and mischievous, that war can make peace. You can punish a nation by war, you can devastate it, you can rob it of its territory and impose an indemnity to cripple it in the future, but you cannot in this way make peace. Never can any nation have a more complete victory over another than Germany had over France when the Franco-German War ended, and never was peace more patently "patched-up" or more clearly vitiated by the qualities of inconclusiveness than the Peace of

Frankfurt in May 1871. France and Germany lived in a state of armed truce from 1871 to 1914, and the whole of Europe knew it. The shadow, the fears, the disturbance of the imminent war perturbed Europe throughout the whole generation ; it determined European diplomacy ; it defeated every attempt to arrive at settled agreement ; it created the Alliance of the Central Powers and the Entente between the surrounding nations ; finally, it merged itself in the causes of this war.

The blindness of a people at war believing that absolute military victory is the only way to peace characterizes all wars. It is now more than an arguable proposition that we could have made a better peace in 1800 than we did fifteen years later. The Treaty of Paris which ended the Crimean War in 1856 was considered by Queen Victoria as " rather premature " and was opposed by Palmerston. As a matter of fact, it could have been secured in 1855. Mr. J. A. Farrer, writing in the *Manchester Guardian,* says, after a survey of the seven great wars of the last two centuries to which this country has been a party :—

> When one thinks of the countless millions of lives that have been sacrificed in these former wars by their needless prolongation, for some insignificant aim, or for some party purpose of the time, one is inclined to execrate the memory of those who, in their rejection of premature peaces, effected belated ones which added so unnecessarily to the world's sufferings. It is not a premature peace that we have to fear so much as a belated one ; for the balance of history is on the side of those who in

former wars favoured what seemed a premature peace, not on the side of those who prolonged those wars for no result that justified their continuance.

When a war breaks out it drives with its terrible force the peoples of all the belligerent nations into what is called the patriotic camp. They all believe they are right. Then some measure of calm comes. The first pain of death and suffering is sobering. They all feel hatred of the slaughter and are disturbed by the privations. That also begins to pass, however. People get accustomed to death both at home and on the field, and suffering becomes habitual. By that time the military pressure has begun to show itself, and through the mists we can see how the battle sways and which side is likely to be beaten. The victor is unwilling to stay his hand; the conquered fights to remove disgrace. Then the military end comes. The cannons can fire no more, and the vanquished nation, sullen, angry, and resentful, like poor, unhappy Queen Mary, nurses its grievance in its heart and begins to study revenge. Civilization and the pacific purposes of the peoples have been defeated. Militarism, beaten on the field, retires into the hearts of the people as into a sanctuary. That is the course of all national wars, and the failure of all statesmen hitherto is that they have allowed that full course to be run.

It seems absurd, but it is true, that the future peace depends, not on the victor but on the van-

quished. It is not the amount of military success but that of military defeat which determines whether the nations are to settle down. It is because this is true that victors so often make a mess of things and undo the military results of war by the political consequences. By assuming that the victors can settle things, we forget that the essential problem is to get the vanquished to accept things.

A simple truth recognized by all military writers, but turned by them to imperfect use, is always obscured in the minds of people during a war. It is that war is an incident in political policy, like a spurt in the course of a race.[1] When it is over, the political policy goes on again, and the value of the war is determined by whether it has aided or hindered the policy. This truth must be hammered at and hammered at. If this war does not end militarism and the menace of force, the object of the British people in accepting it will have been betrayed.

So I return to the political question. When, in that evolution of popular feeling during a war, has war reached its maximum political effect? Evidently somewhere about the middle, just at the time when the crowds are being urged to shout that they will have no inconclusive peace.

[1] "In one word, the art of war in its highest point of view is policy. War is only a part of political intercourse, therefore by no means an independent thing in itself."—CLAUSEWITZ.

Students of Clausewitz will remember that in a finely impressive passage in his book *On War*, he insists that the military leaders should always keep before them the art of forcing the people of the enemy nation into a frame of mind which induces them to submit. That pregnant idea is much wider in its common sense than Clausewitz saw. It means that the statesmen as well as the generals of the belligerent nations should study the minds of their enemies, for a willingness to submit arises, not from the fear and the sacrifice of war but from mental and moral opinions as well. This justifies—nay, indeed it necessitates—the demand of such bodies as the Union of Democratic Control that statesmen should make their intentions clear, not only in order that the peoples at war should understand what they are fighting for and what they are fighting against, but also that the statesmen themselves may have the ends they think the war is to serve definitely before them, and so prevent the war from entering upon a stage when every new military success only drives the political goal farther and farther off. If the rulers who conduct wars really mean to establish peace permanently in the end, war and diplomacy together must be inspired by the Clausewitz idea, and the object of waging war must be to produce in the minds of the peoples such attitudes as incline them to accept peace. A war which ends in unwilling submission, or which leaves as an inheritance

fresh causes of war, is not ended at all. For the "end" of a war is not military victory but peace. The military mind assumes, as a matter of fact, that war can never end, but the civil mind makes no such assumption. That is why the military mind thinks only of "absolute" victory in terms of military success, whereas the civil mind ought to think of it in terms of political success. To-day we are sacrificing political success and ultimate peace to military success. For it is clear that the political climax does not coincide with the military climax, the former coming when weariness without resentment is at its maximum, the latter when defeat is absolute and humiliation is deepest.

From this point of view the Army is an instrument in the hands of the men responsible for political policy, and that is why we must apply a maxim of the militarists themselves in a wider and truer way than they apply it. Clausewitz wrote that "the first, the grandest, and most decisive act of judgment which the statesman and general exercises" is to understand precisely what the object of war is, and not "wish to make of it something which, by the nature of its relations, it is impossible for it to be." The statesman of any capacity and judgment ought to know when the war has secured him his political object, and then immediately put his political forces into action and so win his purpose. That is exactly what our statesmen never do and what the men at

present at the head of affairs are declining to do. Be they Conservative or Liberal, militarist Labour or Socialist, they belong to the old order who see in the triumph and the support of force the conditions of peace. They are where the Congress of Vienna and the Conferences of Paris and Frankfurt were. And yet upon the ending of this war politically, and upon that alone, depends the future peace of Europe.

Let us assume that the problem to-day is Germany, and that it centres round the question whether the German military mind is to dominate the policy of that country, and so maintain in Europe a sense of insecurity that has to be temporarily allayed by armaments. How is Europe to get guarantees against this? No sane man would suggest that the Government of Germany can be controlled by any combination of Powers in occupation of Berlin. Sooner or later we have to trust ourselves and Europe to the will and policy of a self-governing Germany. When the best and the worst have been done, Germany will still have it in her power to stir up strife and fear or accept peace. How will military operations affect that will and policy? If Germany is left in the frame of mind in which France was in 1871, obviously the effect upon Europe will be bad. But if Germany is not to be left where France was, equally obviously we must show our trust in her self-governing capacity

at the earliest practicable time. To force the popular will of Germany into the arms of militarism is to defeat the very purpose for which we engaged in the war. To end this war with the peoples not on speaking terms is to sacrifice for no gain the thousands of our men left to sleep in Belgium and France, because such an end would not only give militarism a new lease of power but would increase its grip on the throat of civilization.

I believe that the people of Germany now, if released from the strain of the war and the necessity of presenting a united front to the enemy, would end the dominance of militarism, would remove its menace from Europe, and would enter into the co-operation of States which will have to be established if Europe is to be saved from destruction, and I further believe they will be less inclined to that after another year of war. Writing thus, I am no pro-German. I am a pro-European. To me Germany is a problem just as capitalism is a problem, and unless that problem is faced in an atmosphere of scientific rationality it will never be solved at all. Atrocities and brutalities are not only the means by which militarism fights, but those by which it perpetuates itself. They rouse, quite rightly, whirlwinds of moral indignation, and, alas! under these whirlwinds reason is uprooted. How often do we find in life that a man whose cause is just and whose

indignation is altogether worthy is swept to ruin and ineffectiveness by the fury of his moral indignation overwhelming his rational judgment! Our lunatic asylums, and the wildernesses where our Ishmaels are, are full of such wrecks of good but injured men. From the people gush bountiful springs of pure feeling, but these springs water the weedy fields cultivated by their rulers. I want the crimes committed by Germans punished; if it can be proved that crimes have been committed against Germany, I want them punished too. If we could get the various peoples into that frame of mind we could have peace, but only in that way.

As to programmes,[1] I do not believe they present much difficulty provided they are considered by the peoples themselves. The restoration of Belgium, the rehabilitation of France, the settlement of the Balkans, the re-establishment of a Polish autonomy, outlets for Germany—these and kindred questions are so agreed upon really in the hearts of the people that no Conference representative of the people could fail to settle them, or could quarrel about the principles upon which they ought to be settled—the recognition of nationality and self-government, the inviolability of properly sanctioned treaties, the

[1] I do not consider these in detail, but content myself with referring my readers to such books as *Towards a Lasting Settlement*, by C. R. Buxton and others. George Allen & Unwin, 2s. 6d. net.

desirability of arbitration, the convenience of a Council of the nations.

The evil is that all these questions will be approached when the time comes by men who will assume the possibility of further wars, men who will have enmity brooding in their hearts and who will be in a position to play with nations as their stakes, by men who have not freed themselves from a dependence upon militarism as the only guarantee of national security.

Unless the old order of diplomacy and international policy is swept off the stage by the fury of this war, democracy and militarism will be left at hand-grips upon it and Europe will be doomed to the curse of an armed truce. We have suffered much these past two years. A whole generation of men has been obliterated. National wealth, so much needed to enrich the starved lives of our people, has been wasted. A burden of debt unsurpassed in the history of mankind has been accumulated. Problems of terrible import in the State and the workshop have been created. Is this all to go for naught? Is it "Ichabod" that we are writing on the gateways of the future? Is it "Failure" that the next generation will have to carve on the widely scattered graves of this?

These views may for the moment be unpopular. But they are Truth. They are gathered from the waysides of the past. From them, and from them

alone, can we build worthy and abiding monuments upon the graves of the men who have fallen, and to build these monuments no sacrifice imposed upon us by the bitter passions of the moment is too great for us cheerfully to bear.

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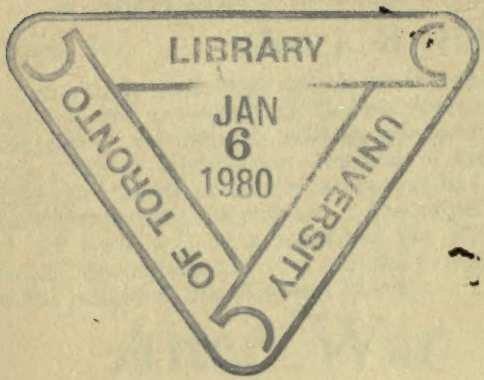
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